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The Shape of Things

THE JAPANESE AIR ATTACK ON COLOMBO ON the island of Ceylon and raids along the east coast of India supply at least a tentative answer to the frequently asked question: Will Japan strike next at India or Australia? During the past fortnight there has been little action along the approaches to Australia except a few light aerial attacks on Port Moresby and Port Darwin. But the seizure of the Andaman Islands and the attack on Ceylon are precisely the moves that must precede an offensive against India. The powerful air and land forces which the enemy has dispatched against Upper Burma also lend confirmation to the belief that an attack on India is imminent. While it would be impossible to send a large invasion army through the mountainous passes separating Burma and India, the transfer of air forces from the Australian sector to the Burma front would be a natural step in preparation for the invasion of India. Whether this concentration on the India front is dictated by political or military considerations is not clear at this time. It is quite possible that the Japanese are interested primarily in assuring the failure of the Cripps mission—although it may be argued that the threat to India has played directly into Cripps's hand. Whatever the reason for the attack on Ceylon, the loss of twenty-seven planes may force a reconsideration of Japanese strategy. For it is both bad politics and bad military tactics to have a third of the attacking force shot down.

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AS SPRING SPREADS NORTHWARD ALONG the Russian front, both armies are gathering their forces for what promises to be the most terrific battle of the war. Until the ocean of mud which follows the thaw hardens, neither side can employ its mechanized forces or its heavy artillery on a large scale. The Red Army, however, shows no intention of giving its enemy any respite. It continues, in conjunction with swarms of guerrillas, to drive deep wedges into the Nazi lines, but it has been unable so far to reduce any of the major German "porcupine" positions, such as Staraya Russa, Rzhev, and Kharkov. These appear to be too strong to be captured without the use of heavy guns. The first Nazi spring task will be to reestablish communications

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with these outposts before the Russians can pound them into surrender. Meanwhile spring is also approaching in Manchuria, and although Moscow seems to deprecate discussion of a possible Japanese onslaught on eastern Siberia, it is too realistic to overlook this contingency. Should the coming German offensive misfire, Hitler would undoubtedly urge his Eastern ally to deliver a stab in the back. The Japanese, however, are much more likely to risk war with the Soviets if Hitler succeeds in driving the Red Army farther back. On page 416 of this issue G. A. Borgese outlines a plan by which we might not only develop an offensive against Japan's backyard but also reinforce Russia east and west. There have been many unofficial suggestions to the effect that Russia "ought" to lend us bases to use against Japan, but their authors have not brought forward proposals for buttressing Russian defenses in the Far East. Dr. Borgese's scheme for the dispatch of an American army to Siberia provides for an offensive spearhead against Japan and a strategic reserve to bolster the European front. The mutual advantages it offers to both Russia and America make it, in our opinion, worthy of full consideration.

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RECOGNITION OF THE FREE FRENCH REGIME in central Africa by the United States might be an occasion for rejoicing if it could be interpreted as a step toward the ultimate recognition of Free France as one of the United Nations fighting against the common foe. But there is no evidence that the establishment of an American consulate at Brazzaville in any way implies a weakening in the State Department's policy of appeasing Vichy. On the contrary, such a step just a week after the conclusion of a general understanding with Vichy over shipments to North Africa suggests that the gesture to Free France was meant merely as a sop to United Nations unity. That the gesture will not suffice was made clear in a remarkable speech delivered in London recently by General Charles de Gaulle. The Free French leader pointed out that continuation of French resistance depends on keeping France and its great traditions alive as a reality to fight for. He asked how Frenchmen can be expected "to suffer death and torture in their resistance" if they are "treated neither as allies nor even as belligerents, how [they can] be persuaded that in victory lies resurrection, in capitulation lies dishonor . . . if their allies . . . accept the neutralization of France as dictated by Hitler at Vichy." The State Department insists that its policy has prevented Vichy from becoming an outright ally of Hitler's. This claim is based on the assumption that Vichy possesses an existence independent of Hitler's will. But even if the assumption were sound, what profit could there be in appeasing the shadow at Vichy and destroying the spiritual substance of the illustrious French Republic.

PIERRE LAVAL'S ATTEMPTED COME-BACK HAS proved a flop. Writing in the pro-Axis Paris paper *Nouveaux Temps*, Jean Luchaire declares that the United States is to blame, thereby, we suspect, conferring on the State Department more honor than is its rightful due. The chief credit for this setback to the leading French collaborationist, as well as for the persistent failure "to take" of the policy he inaugurated, should be given, we think, to the French people as a whole. However much the Vichy government would like to work for the New Order, it knows that collaboration cannot be made a reality so long as 95 per cent of the French are bitterly opposed to aiding the Axis. Pétain does not wish to exchange his shaky popularity for the hatred and contempt that is shriveling Vidkun Quisling. And this probably accounts also for the fact that the Germans are not pressing Pétain harder, for if they forced him to take action which would brand him as a traitor in French eyes—such as surrendering the French fleet—they would also end his usefulness. Meanwhile Vichy has raised the appeasement stakes by revealing that it now has at its disposal, thanks to "special permission" of the Nazis, about a thousand modern warplanes, or more than France possessed at the beginning of the war. The implication is that they could be used against Britain if Vichy were provoked too far. But could the pilots be found to man them for such a mission?

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ALTHOUGH PROFESSOR CARLTON J. H. HAYES can hardly fail to better the record of his predecessor as ambassador to Madrid, Alexander W. Weddell, it is unfortunately impossible to welcome his appointment without reservations. We are bound to recall that in October, 1937, he was among the 175 signatories of a Catholic statement supporting Franco and declaring that the vast majority of Spaniards backed the rebellion. The same document denied that the church in Spain was in any way committed to the government or ideology of Nazi or Fascist auxiliaries helping Franco. Dr. Hayes is a distinguished scholar whose studies of nationalism have received the honor of suppression in the Third Reich. He has publicly denounced totalitarianism as "a revolt against the whole historic civilization of the West," and he is well aware that a Nazi victory would mean death to the Catholic church. Events since 1937 can hardly have failed to convince him that the war in Spain was not a civil war but a preliminary campaign in the Nazi struggle for world supremacy. When he reaches Madrid he will be able to see for himself what three years of Franco have done for Spain, and we find it difficult to believe that his intellectual integrity will not overcome any lingering prejudices. In that event the State Department should receive more objective reports from Madrid than it has enjoyed in the recent past and less support for its appeasement policies.

THE SENATE PLAN FOR LIMITING PROFITS ON war contracts would appear to be even less satisfactory than the dubious House proposal for restricting them to a straight 6 per cent. In an effort to encourage small business to accept a greater share in the war effort, the Senate Appropriations Committee whipped together a graduated scheme that would permit 10 per cent profits on contracts not exceeding \$100,000, and a maximum of 2 per cent on contracts of more than \$50,000,000. Both the Senate and the House plans are open to overwhelming objections based on our experience with cost-plus contracts in the last war. This experience shows conclusively that efforts to limit profits by contract provisions lead to inflated costs and, in the end, uncontrolled profits. While it is possible for the government to hold down costs on any single contract by carefully checking each item in the producer's books, it is physically impossible to check each item of costs in the thousands of contracts that are concluded every month. Nor can any overall system of profit limitation take into account the differences in the different types of war production. On some items the turnover is rapid, and a company may earn the maximum profit many times during the course of a year. On other items—such as battleships—the profit may have to be spread over several years. Similarly, the ratio of earnings of a company requiring a small amount of capital would be far higher than those of a company requiring a large amount of capital.

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IN DEVISING THE SCHEME THE SENATE apparently assumed that the large contracts would go primarily to large companies and the small ones to small business. Actually many large corporations handle small contracts, and if the Senate plan were enacted, the large companies would undoubtedly insist on breaking down all their contracts into a number of small ones—a course scarcely calculated to accelerate the war effort. The alternative to the Senate and House plans is not the creation of a new crop of war millionaires, as some Republicans have suggested, but the enactment of an effective excess-profits tax which would recapture all exorbitant profits *after* the productive process had been completed.

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MARTIN DIES, THE TEXAS DON QUIXOTE, may have met his match in that Iowa windmill, Henry Wallace. The Dies committee's attack on Wallace's Board of Economic Warfare was no more unscrupulous or inaccurate than the attacks it has made on other persons and groups. Armed with the same old sucker list of the American League for Peace and Democracy, which went out of existence long ago, the Dies committee reeled off charges of communism, without proof, against thirty-five members of the board; and as usual it made a stupid mistake—listing as a "Communist" a Wall Street

banker named Vaughn, now with the BEW, whom the committee had got mixed up with a professor named Vaughan. In spite of its outrageous practices, the Dies committee has continued to get appropriations from a House full of Representatives who were afraid that if they didn't support Martin he would tell the folks back home that they had failed to vote against communism—which would be as fatal as not voting against sin.

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IN THE PRESENT CASE, HOWEVER, THERE IS a chance that Dies's spell may be broken. The life of the committee has been extended, but the appropriation has not been made, and we suspect that the anger of Henry Wallace is being applied where it will do the most good. The White House released the other day a report by the FCC pointing out that Berlin was using Mr. Dies's indiscriminate and idiotic charges of communism with great gusto; and the revelation by Jerry Voorhis, a member of the committee, that its latest attack was launched not only without his knowledge but without so much as a meeting of the committee should also have its effect. The conduct of the Dies committee in its investigation of alleged "communistic" influences should have been enough, long ago, to bring about its end. But this is not the worst. For years now *The Nation* has been pointing out that Dies's conduct in *not* investigating fascist organizations except in a few "token" instances has something to do with Dies's own friendly contacts with such unsavory outfits as the Christian Front. If the FBI is as efficient as it should be, it must have a dossier on Dies more than sufficient to prevent any further appropriations for his un-American committee.

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DESPITE PROTESTS THE STATE DEPARTMENT continues to give encouragement to Tibor Eckhardt, who, as readers will remember, in the course of a journey last year from Budapest to New York underwent a strange metamorphosis from anti-Semitic fascist to anti-Nazi leader of "Free Hungary." In a recent letter Harold B. Hoskins, executive assistant of the State Department, asserted: "The activities of Mr. Eckhardt's committee and those of the American-Hungarian Federation are fully known to this department and have been worked out in close cooperation with us. . . . Their set-up is entirely in line with the government's policy." On March 26 Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, chairman of the Union for Democratic Action, wrote to Sumner Welles, Acting Secretary of State, pointing out that in view of his questionable past Mr. Eckhardt was hardly entitled to such consideration and confidence and asking for an investigation of his record. In his reply Mr. Welles declared that the phrases quoted from Mr. Hoskins's letter referred only to the organizational procedure recommended for all "free movements," and did not imply any "recogni-

tion, formal or informal, of Dr. Eckhardt's movement." This, it was further explained, was in line with the department's policy of keeping currently informed about the activities of all "free movements" but not extending recognition to any of them. Our satisfaction at this statement of policy is tempered by realization that it still gives Mr. Eckhardt a great deal more standing than he deserves while doing much less than justice to some other free movements. Apparently the State Department is still unable to make clear distinctions between our friends and our enemies. Otherwise it would know in which category to place Mr. Eckhardt—one-time leader of that prototype fascist organization, the Awakening Magyars, and supporter of Nürnberg laws for Hungary.

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WILLIAM DUDLEY PELLEY, FOUNDER AND leader of the Silver Shirts, is the fifth person to be arrested by federal agents for sedition since our entry into war. Unlike George Sylvester Viereck and George W. Christian, who was seized last week, Pelley was not accused of direct connections with the German government or with an attempt to undermine the morale of the services. His offense was simply the publication of defeatist propaganda in a fascist magazine of general circulation. The distinction is important, for it is the center of a debate that is going on in these pages and elsewhere over the wisdom of suppressing the openly fascist press. *The Nation* has taken a stand in favor of curbing those newspapers which clearly take the Nazi line, whether they are financed by Hitler or are owned by American fascists. If the government follows that policy, as apparently it will in the case of Pelley, it will be a simple matter to deal with Father Coughlin's *Social Justice* and Edward James Smythe's *Our Common Cause*.

How Long Can Men Work?

ONE of the vicious aspects of the recent controversy over the forty-hour week has been the fact that avowed opponents of the forty-hour week have not been concerned about the length of the working week at all. Their concern has been to reduce wages—and increase profits—by eliminating the time-and-a-half wages now paid to employees working more than forty hours. On that issue *The Nation* has made itself reasonably clear: we see no reason at present for changing the Labor Standards Act, and we regard the moves which have been made in that direction as ill-concealed efforts to undermine confidence in the Administration.

There remains, however, the question of what is the optimum work week in war time. In view of the im-

pending shortage of man-power this question should be faced realistically. Unfortunately, there is little scientific information on which to form a judgment. The criteria we have ordinarily used cannot be applied without modification when the country's safety is at stake. In time of peace the health and well-being of the individual workers must be the first consideration. In time of emergency our first interest must be production. Human considerations become secondary, but we dare not ignore them.

War or no war, men still tire after a long and arduous day. As they tire, the number of accidents and mechanical breakdowns increase. There is, therefore, a definite limit beyond which the work week cannot safely be stretched even in periods of dire emergency. Just what this limit is remains a matter of dispute. But its existence was convincingly demonstrated when the British government sought to increase production in the period right after Dunkirk. The disastrous results of that experiment deserve wider publicity than they have had.

In Britain, as in this country, the basic work week has not been changed as a result of the war. Payment is made on an overtime basis for all hours above the standard. Prior to Dunkirk workers in British war industries were working, as an average, a six-day, fifty-six-hour week. After Dunkirk all war industries were placed on a seven-day week. The average work week was 69.5 hours in June, 1940, and many industries worked their employees 73 and 77 hours. Under the spur of the emergency, output rose more than 10 per cent. After a few weeks, however, it began to decline. The amount of sickness among the employees increased sharply; absenteeism also rose as workers sought relief from the intolerable strain; there was an appalling rise in the number of accidents and preventable breakdowns. As a result, the actual number of hours worked—as distinct from the length of the working week—began to decline. In August the working week remained at about 68.5 hours, but the average employee worked only 51 hours as compared with 53 hours before Dunkirk. Industrial output showed an even greater decline, falling to 88 per cent of the pre-Dunkirk level. While part of this decline may be attributed to the effect of the night air raids which began at the end of the month, the weekly trend prior to the bombing was so sharply downward that the government became alarmed and hastened to restore the six-day week. Recovery did not come immediately, but by the beginning of 1941 industrial output, on the shorter week, had risen above the pre-Dunkirk level.

Largely as a result of this experience, the British Medical Research Council has recently recommended that weekly hours for men should not exceed sixty or sixty-five and that women's hours should not exceed fifty-five or sixty. The British work week now averages about fifty-five hours.

No comparable study has been made in this country. But it is generally agreed that the tempo in American factories is faster than in England, and that the optimum work week in this country is consequently considerably shorter. A recent survey made at Princeton University suggests that most American industries reach peak efficiency with a forty-eight-hour week for men and a forty-hour week for women. This, of course, is an average. There are certain types of light work in which a sixty-hour week is not harmful; there are others—such as coal mining—in which the forty-hour week has been found too long.

Many war industries are already operating close to the optimum levels. The machine-tool industry today operates on a fifty-five-hour basis. Shipbuilding and all government-owned war plants are on a forty-eight-hour week. The steel industry has found four forty-hour shifts to be the most efficient method of operation. But some war industries are still not working a full week. Where they are not, management and not labor is responsible. The cost of overtime is at best a lame excuse. If any company were unable to pay time-and-a-half, we can be sure its case would have been thoroughly aired in the past few weeks. As a matter of fact, most companies find that the savings in overhead in the longer week more than cancel the additional labor charge.

A clear-cut national policy with regard to the work week in war industries is badly needed. But before we fix that policy, the entire situation should be carefully studied on the basis of present-day American conditions. Why not initiate such a study now while there is yet time?

When Will the "Heads Roll"?

HOW much longer is Donald M. Nelson going to keep Merrill C. Meigs, ex-Hearst Chicago publisher, in charge of aircraft at the War Production Board? The new report made by the Truman committee is only the latest of several pleas, some public, some private, for the reorganization of this crucial sector in the board. Meigs has been in charge of aircraft since the NDAC and has survived all the alphabetical reshuffles through OPM, SPAB, and WPB, although he has yet to produce a single constructive idea and has a completely undistinguished record. Meigs survives, as do so many of the original dollar-a-year men, through one loudly ballyhooed shake-up after another, despite Nelson's promise weeks ago that heads would roll when he tackled the job of reorganization.

The importance of aircraft makes the case of Meigs an

outstanding one. The Truman committee, to which we already owe so much in the way of courageous exposure and constructive criticism, shows the kind of planning and thinking needed in this industry. Its subcommittee on light metals and aircraft and its chief counsel, Hugh Fulton, have just come back from a tour of West Coast plants. The subcommittee was made up of Senators Wallgren (Democrat) of Washington; Kilgore (Democrat) of West Virginia, and Ball (Republican) of Minnesota. They sought to sift the disquieting rumors of a deliberate "slowdown" by aircraft manufacturers. The big plants are primarily assembly plants, and the subcommittee found that shortages in critical items made it impossible to operate them at full capacity. "Rather than work trained crews at top speed until materials are exhausted and then lay men off for a few days, with probable loss of morale and trained mechanics, the aircraft plants have simply refrained," according to the subcommittee, "from turning on full pressure for peak production, which was their wisest course."

The subcommittee says that "a poor job of over-all planning, from aluminum ingots to finished aircraft, by the armed services and the old OPM must be blamed for the present situation." But the "old" OPM, in so far as aircraft and light metals are concerned, is virtually the same as the "new" WPB. The subcommittee itself reports that the "WPB still does not have a single top-notch aircraft-production man in its organization." In aircraft Meigs is still responsible for the condition uncovered by the subcommittee. "When the big expansion of aircraft plants was undertaken a year or more ago, no attention was paid to the necessity of expanding at the same time the facilities of the thousands of sub-contractors who supply parts and sub-assemblies. As a result, in some vital airplane parts production is not up to the capacity of the big assembly plants to absorb them."

Part of the lag in aircraft production behind full capacity results from shortages in aluminum and magnesium, in neither of which is production being expanded as rapidly as it should and could be. The evidence gathered, the subcommittee reports mildly, "indicates that there is still something seriously wrong in the light-metals section of the War Production Board, successor of the old OPM section which failed so miserably to anticipate and prepare for the greatly increased demand for these metals." The subcommittee means the aluminum and magnesium branch. In the OPM this branch was headed by Arthur D. Bunker, dollar-a-year man for the government and \$60,000-a-year man for Lehman Brothers. The Truman committee itself exposed his partiality for Alcoa and his continued connection with the banking house. The same Arthur D. Bunker is still head of the aluminum and magnesium branch of the

WPB. That is the something still "seriously wrong" in light metals as in aircraft, and it will not be corrected until Nelson, who is as faint-hearted as the President about firing people, gets out the ax and keeps the promise he made when he became head of the WPB. When, Mr. Nelson, will the heads roll?

India's Zero Hour

BY FRED KIRCHWEY

FOR the first time in their long and bitter struggle for freedom, the leaders of the Indian people have power comparable with that of their rulers. They are not strong enough to dictate terms to Britain, but they are in a position to drive a hard bargain. To expect them to resist the temptation to do so is to demand almost superhuman detachment and wisdom. They have waited long for this hour. Their natural desire to take full advantage of the situation is heightened by emotional resistance to an offer born, not of Britain's willing acknowledgment of the justice of the Indian claims, but of its own eleventh-hour desperation. Add to this feeling the conflicting claims of party and caste and class and religious group, and the reasons for hesitation and delay stand out clearly.

But hesitation and delay may prove fatal. Today Japanese planes are dropping bombs on Ceylon and towns along India's east coast, Japanese ships are moving through the Bay of Bengal, and Japanese troops drive slowly but relentlessly across Burma toward the borders of India. The hour which has given India such immense new bargaining power has brought dangers much greater than any concessions its leaders could possibly win. To procrastinate in these circumstances, to fight for minor concessions, is to invite a disaster in which the future freedom of India would be one of the lesser casualties. Today, with Japan hammering at every gate, more is asked of India's negotiators than normal political wisdom and ability. They must shed, suddenly, overnight, the preoccupations of subject people struggling for their nation's freedom and must assume the stature of free men prepared to collaborate with all the forces fighting on their side against the final eclipse of freedom. This is a mighty challenge. Mahatma Gandhi, clothed in his impenetrable faith in non-violence, has retired from the field. It remains for all of India's leaders, but particularly for Nehru and Azad, to meet the challenge with a sense of responsibility that reaches far beyond the borders of their own country or the empire.

For India must realize that its decision is almost as important to the United States as to England or to India itself. Today no nation can live in isolation. This country tried to, stubbornly and stupidly, yielding bit by bit

to a necessity that should have been apparent months before the bombs fell on Hawaii. India has a right to demand a responsible share in the direction of its own defense, but in this hour of crisis it has not the right to demand full freedom. Not even the years of exploitation and oppression it has endured give it that right. The war has reduced the independence of all nations; today each one must subordinate its trade, its finance, its military arrangements, even some measure of political sovereignty to the necessities of the greater group with which it is joined in the struggle against Axis domination. There is good reason to believe that Britain's offer to India was itself in part the product of British-American consultation. At least it can be said that the United States had every right as a major member of the United Nations to urge such a policy on Britain. And by the same token the United States, with Britain and the other nations fighting the Axis, has a right to ask India's acceptance of a freedom which is qualified only by the demands of the war itself.

Complete independence when it comes will bring India a swarm of problems and conflicts no nation could be asked to tackle while plunging simultaneously into a great war. Even to list the difficulties that lie in the way of a workable plan of self-government would demonstrate the hopelessness of the idea. To give India its full self-government now would be to give India to the Axis. The offer brought to New Delhi by Cripps, modified to meet such reasonable demands as that for an Indian Minister of Defense, provides as much freedom as is compatible with the stable administrative processes required by war.

Whether it provides enough freedom to stir the Indians to strong resistance is not so certain. Drugged by years of pacifist teaching, obsessed with their age-long animosity toward Britain, the people of India must fully believe in the new future that is held before them if they are to fight as they must. The longer the negotiations, the sharper the bargaining, the less will be the chance of winning their support for the terrible struggle that lies ahead. Only prompt, vigorous, confident leadership will work the necessary miracle in the minds and emotions of the powerful, sluggish Indian population.

As this issue goes to press, a few portents give reason to hope that the miracle may be performed. Nehru has apparently promised the American emissary, Louis A. Johnson, that if Britain agrees to an Indian Defense Minister the Congress will accept the British offer and India will fight all comers. The British government is said to have given Cripps an almost completely free hand in the negotiations. And it is even rumored, though vaguely, that President Roosevelt may intervene more directly, perhaps to "guarantee" the carrying out of Britain's promises. If a settlement is in the making, great credit must be given to the patient, wise efforts of

Britain's negotiator: the character and behavior of Sir Stafford Cripps may prove as good a guaranty of British intentions as the word of Mr. Roosevelt. But the final responsibility—and the fullest credit if success comes—rests with the popular leaders of India. It is they who

must balance the just claims of their country against the terrible pressure of events. It is their influence alone that in the end can persuade their fellow-Indians to take up the burden of war in the hope of saving freedom for the world as well as gaining it for themselves.

“Not to Be Attributed”

BY I. F. STONE

Washington, April 6

SOME officials in the State Department seem to be terribly anxious to cover up for the Standard Oil Company, and I think the Truman committee ought to find out who they are. In a prepared statement before the committee on Tuesday, W. S. Farish, president of Standard Oil of New Jersey, set out to answer seven charges against his company. Of the third, “that Standard made shipments to Italian and German air lines in Brazil, contrary to the wishes of the State Department,” Farish said, “This is also unfounded.” Hugh Fulton, counsel to the committee, then asked him, “Does that mean that the State Department knew that your Brazilian subsidiary was furnishing aviation gasoline to the Italians?” His reference was to the Italian “Lati” air line through which the Nazis sent spies, medals, and propaganda films to the Americas, receiving certain important strategic materials on the return trips. Farish’s answer was, “Yes sir, and the State Department approved of every delivery that was made.”

On the following day the State Department issued one of those “not to be attributed” statements usually reserved for delicate matters of international policy in regard to which the department would not want to be quoted even indirectly. The effect of this statement was to support Farish and to make it appear that the Standard Oil Company had done a meritorious deed. It was said that at the request of the department the Standard Oil Company made no deliveries to the aviation lines except with the approval of the department, and then only out of certain stocks. The aim, the department release went on, was to reduce the supplies of gasoline available to the lines and so force them out of business. The plan worked so well, the statement said, that the Axis aviation companies quit business soon after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The State Department not only issued this unusual release but took unusual steps to make sure that it got into the papers. The press-relations division of the department actually telephoned correspondents to tell them about the statement, and offered to, and in several cases did, dictate it to them over the telephone. The calls

were not limited to men who cover the department regularly, and at least one of the correspondents so honored rarely goes near the place. Inquiry at the Truman committee brought the response that “some of the Standard crowd had got to the department”—no very difficult task. Those committee members who knew about the statement said they didn’t ask Assistant Secretary of State A. A. Berle about it when he appeared before the committee on Friday because they didn’t want to embarrass him.

No one in Washington knows the art of the weasel word better than certain officials in the State Department, and the statement issued seems to have contained no untruths, but it did succeed in giving the newspapers a completely false impression. To make the long hop across the South Atlantic, Lati had to have aviation gasoline of from 87 to 100 octanes. It could only obtain it from Standard Oil or its subsidiaries. The State Department was worried about this line, but the best it could do, in its feeble way, was to get a voluntary agreement with Standard Oil in April, 1941, to limit the supplies of the air line at any one time to just enough for thirty days’ operation. Thirty days’ supply was sufficient, of course, to keep the line running, and the department’s action was hardly vigorous enough to answer the question this whole affair raised in the minds of Latin Americans. As William La Varre, chief of the American Republics Section of the Department of Commerce, testified; “The Latin Americans couldn’t understand how we officially could say we wanted to rid South America of Nazi German agents and still provide the only means by which they could go back and forth.”

Standard Oil found even this thirty-day agreement irksome. Six months later, according to the testimony of Assistant Secretary Berle, the department was informed by counsel for Standard Oil that the company had a contract with the air line for larger quantities of aviation gas and oil and could be sued if it failed to deliver. The lawyer wanted to know whether the American government could indemnify Standard for any loss incurred through breach of contract. When Berle replied that the government had no power to do so, he was informed that

under these circumstances the board of directors of Standard would not agree to breach its contract. A question by Senator Harold L. Burton of Ohio and the answer by Berle will show just how misleading was the "not to be attributed" statement issued by the State Department.

Q. Before you leave that, does that mean that at that time Standard Oil took the position that they could make any contract they wanted as a private company against the vital interests of the United States, and then stick to it, because to break the contract they had made would cost them money?

A. The position they took was that they were going to keep any contracts they had made, irrespective of the interests of the United States. . . .

No one at the State Department seems to have thought of asking Standard Oil to show the contract, but La Varre testified that he had tried for three years to trace down "the so-called Standard Oil contract" and that there wasn't any such contract in existence. When Senator Mead said this didn't "seem to conform with the most cooperative spirit expressed by the Standard witnesses to the committee," La Varre said:

My only experience is, I have spent many years in Latin America and have seen Standard Oil operating in all the countries, and there is never any cooperation

with our foreign ambassadors or with the State Department or with the Commerce Department.

Senator Mead: Never any cooperation?

Mr. La Varre: Never any.

I dwell at some length on this story because it is typical of what the Truman committee hearings on Standard Oil are revealing. One incident after another has shown that neither the government nor Standard's own partners have been able to rely upon its word. The case of Lati is not the only one in which Standard Oil showed itself much more ready to cooperate with the Axis than to cooperate with its own government. The State Department's release of Wednesday is only one example of the way in which a government department, after being defied and stepped on by Standard, can be persuaded to come to its defense. High officials of the Navy Department have asked the Truman committee to "go easy" on Standard Oil, and testimony in the hearings show the Army-Navy Munitions Board dutifully making the recommendations that best serve Standard's purposes. Standard has been as arrogant in dealing with our government as it has been subservient in dealing with the Nazis, and there is good reason to suspect that it pleaded *nolo contendere* to the Thurman Arnold anti-trust charges and paid the maximum fines because a trial would have exposed its friendly relations with the Third Reich.

A. E. F. to Siberia

BY G. A. BORGESE

IF WE want to win the war it is high time to inquire where, and when, and how we plan to meet victory. The record of the professional strategists so far is not so thoroughly triumphant as to inhibit the layman who knows his own limitations. He may humbly hope to be no less fortunate than the poor Persian nomad who taught Cyrus how to storm Sardis, or the little clergyman who showed Charlemagne the way to outflank the Lombardic fortresses and to seize Italy. (The stories of these amateur strategists can be read in *The Nation* of two weeks ago.)

The time of passive strategy is over. We can no longer accept with easy satisfaction the temperate doctrine of assimilating the blows and "wearing down the enemy," while Time and Production—those two allegorical deities flanking the democratic Mars—work for us. Production may be on our side, or on the side of the enemy, or impartially on both; and we are becoming not a little suspicious that Time may work against us. The tenet that defense will not win the war has risen to popularity, and the request for new fronts is daily gaining momentum.

General Wavell is reported to have said that strategy is a matter of common sense—even though, one might add, common sense is not so common as the idiom implies. If that is so, the fronts that have been publicly proposed to this moment need but brief comment.

Western Europe is notoriously in the grip of the German forces. Coups like the heroic raid on Saint-Nazaire, even if frequently and expensively repeated, are no more than pin-pricks in the grand manner; able no doubt to torment the monster but insufficient to slay it. They may compel Germany to divert a certain number of divisions from the Russian front to the west; they can hardly exhaust the German resources for defense and offense. Retaliation also, with the technique of the commando applied by Germany against British bases and cities, is easily conceivable.

A landing in such proportions as to carve a route of invasion from the Atlantic coast to the Rhine and beyond is, in the present state of the shipping facilities and of the Nazi occupation, nothing more than a daydream. It is not likely that anything decisive can be tried via

Western Europe unless miracles happen within Germany or the Nazi war machine is extremely damaged on other fronts. The hope that the Russians alone might do the job is on the wane while this most glorious, if dolorous, Russian winter is yielding to the ominous spring.

Dissatisfaction, we are told, is fermenting again in Spain, and Allied forces might find help there. A bridgehead, we may add, could be built more successfully in Portugal, open to a large-scale landing and comparatively distant from an immediate German countermarch. But apart from the problem of shipping, we all know the passions and interests which thwart the will of the Western powers whenever the necessity of the fight points to those shores. They are the same passions and interests, obdurately conservative or clerical, that impede all action against Vichy. To this conflict within ourselves we owe a most distressing aspect of this war. The enemy fights to the hilt; we fight, as it were, to the button—with a number of actions prohibited by ourselves to ourselves.

An African march via Dakar has been repeatedly suggested. It would be more feasible if we had taken Dakar. At any rate this proposal is rather pointless if it is directed at North Africa alone. Colonel Kernan's idea of invading Italy would have been excellent two and a half years ago. But Fascist Italy was cherished by too many in the cabinets and general staffs of the "democratic" powers. A larger and speedier bus was never missed.

There is somewhere a baby, not much older than a year, a rather precocious walker and climber. She is fond of climbing the stairs between the first and the second floor of the house where she lives. Unwatched excursions might be dangerous; therefore a gate has been placed at the entrance. She stops at that. Although she romps freely around and has keen eyes, she has never come to the conclusion that she could reach her objective just as easily by way of the backstairs, which also lead to the upper floor. No second gate has been needed. That approach, though unprotected, is not tried.

Sometimes the mental processes of the military mind seem akin to those of such a child. One wonders whether the shapeless immensity of Asia is a reason sufficient to explain the absent-mindedness of the strategists, professional and amateur, all of them peering spellbound toward the Atlantic or Eurafrikan approach to victory, though common sense discovers the gate that forbids that approach.

It is probable that in Asia and nowhere else lies the battlefield for victory. It is a legitimate hope that this notion may penetrate the mind of the military High Command before it is too late.

A layman, long before the invasion of Russia and the attack by Japan, drafted a scheme which he called

the Columbus plan. It was founded on the neglected notion that the earth is round. He proposed initiative against Japan, occupation of Indo-China, junction with the Chinese armies, double-pronged pressure toward Russia and the Middle and Near East, and, finally, appearance of the combined armies on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, via the backstairs, when a convergent action from east and west would make the Nazi stronghold crumble. That plan received some authoritative indorsements. It now belongs to the past.

The same layman, immediately after Pearl Harbor, became Alaska-conscious. He became Siberia-conscious. He realized that the move from Indo-China, suggested in the Columbus plan, could and should be castled north on the chessboard of war, toward and beyond the lands of Marco Polo. Indeed, everybody became Alaska- and Siberia-conscious soon after Pearl Harbor. As early as last January an article in *Free World*, based on apparently serious information, gave in detail the German plan for an invasion of the United States via the northern Pacific. Subsequently there has been much public discussion of Alaska both as a crucial sector of defense and, with or without the support of Russia's Siberian bases, as a base for an attack on Japan.

Defense will not win the war. Its chances in Alaska are probably slighter than in most other sectors. It is highly questionable whether that enormous expanse of wilderness could long be successfully held against invasion thrusts whose objectives the Japanese war lords would not confide to us beforehand. There is no reliable way of parrying a blow at our Pacific defenses unless we make of Alaska and of the northern pockets of the Pacific a base for a full offensive, thus forcing Japan to concentrate on defensive positions in Asia.

But when the latter proposal is made, what is generally meant is a "grand air attack" on Tokyo, on Japanese centers of production and population. Air attacks have not conquered Britain so far; nor did they, for that matter, conquer Madrid. It is fairly probable that no air attack would ever grow grand enough to knock out Japan. Its centers of production can be decentralized; perhaps they are being decentralized while we talk. Its people make a point of indifference to wounds and death.

The appraisal of the air force as a decisive factor in warfare has gone the full swing of the pendulum. For a number of years many military men used to think of the airplane as little more than a kite. Now many of them think of it as a winged deity. Overcompensating past errors, they fancy that the god from the machine will close the tragedy.

The air force is to modern warfare, more or less, what cavalry was in the past. This war, like most others, will be finally won by the infantries, that is, by the passion of the common man inspired by the genius, military and moral,

of his leaders—a truth that was manifest long ago to that strange prophet, Homer Lea.

The corollary should be obvious. We cannot expect Russia to lend-lease us its bases on the coast of eastern Siberia for grand air attacks while its armies, caught in a double war, would bear alone the assault of Japan's land army. An A. E. F. large enough to tip the scales of destiny should be conveyed to Siberia, there to effect at last a junction, in body and soul, with the armies of Russia. From a pivot along the Trans-Siberian Railroad its right or northern wing would point to the Russian front in Europe and to its final goal, Berlin; while the pressure of its center should relieve whatever pressure might be exerted meanwhile by Axis forces on the Near and Middle East. The left or southern wing of the A. E. F., after a junction with the Chinese armies, should envision as its final goal Burma, Thailand, and Singapore, with the armies of Japan enveloped from the rear and squeezed toward the sea.

This is possibly the "where and how" of victory. The problem of when victory can be won is not irrelevant either. It is not a matter of indifference whether we win the war in a reasonable time or in an indefinite future. The purpose, heroic though it be, of "carrying on the fight from year to year," is no plan at all. A long war of attrition, conducted according to the butt-and-bleed strategy of frontal defense and frontal counter-attack, may well consume our enemy. It may also consume most of the values we are fighting for. A third candidate for victory, neither Nazism nor ourselves, is lurking in the dark. He is half plague, half chaos.

The roads of Asia are proposed as possibly leading to a victory timely enough to make sense for our generation with full realization that a double march through Asia is no jaunt. The layman himself realizes some of the terrific difficulties. Humbly and gladly he would forget about it if a more sensible scheme were offered. But no other plans that have been submitted so far to the public mind are more comfortable than this or half so promising.

The first difficulty in it is the conveyance of a large expeditionary force from this continent to Siberia while the ratio of the naval forces in the Pacific is unfavorable to us. The outdated critic, feeding on the textbook geography of his high school, looks askance at a frightening map and drops his discouraged arms. The up-to-date geographer, the tactician who has kept pace with contemporary exploration and research, is in a quite different frame of mind. He knows the difficulties, but he also knows that they are not insurmountable. He admits that an expeditionary force, even as large as half a million men with the full equipment of mechanized warfare, can be conveyed to Alaska and from Alaska to Asia if our will grasps the means.

While strategy, however, is common sense plus

imagination plus will to victory, tactics is a specialized craft. We shall not discuss here today the assets and liabilities of the alternative and complementary routes (stepping-stones of the Aleutian Islands to Kamchatka and the Amur, Bering Strait—Arctic route to the Siberian rivers); nor shall we scrutinize the reticent or contradictory Russian maps, designed rather to mislead the enemy than to guide an unexpected friend; or, finally, compare the Arctic route as it is today since Schmidt definitely opened it in 1932 and 1933 with what it was in the days of Nordenskiöld and still is in the minds of the uninstructed. Information of this kind is not around the corner, but neither is it guarded in impregnable vaults, and a study—as competent as it was heartening—of the system of communications and of the military opportunities "on top of the world" was contributed by Lyn Irvine to *The Nation* of March 28.

It will suffice here to say that strategy cannot be the handmaid of tactics, and that where there is a will there is a way. Imaginative conceptions, no doubt, entail stupendous risks. But it is only the automatic thinker to whom the earth is as flat as his mind who can offer us plans exempt from every danger except the danger or certainty of consumptive defeat and slow doom.

The upshot of all inquiries to this date is that the real obstacles to a global strategy in Asia are not of a technical nature. They are political. The most authoritative observers regretfully state that no Siberian plan is conceivable in practical terms as long as the Russians do not want to "play ball."

It is credible that the Russians are not particularly anxious to see the armies of the Western democracies—which they mistrust—encamped on their own soil. Neither are their suspicions particularly allayed by the diplomatic situation of these fateful days. Unwisely the Russians are asking for territorial guaranties when the war is over. A thousand times more unwisely we hesitate to accede to their demands. It is more than credible that the Western democracies are not particularly eager to join hands openly with Russian communism—which they condemn. This mutual disaffection explains the self-imposed blinkers which obscure from both parties the sector or sectors of the war in which full cooperation is possible.

But the truth is dawning on many minds that if America-Britain, Russia, and China do not hang together, they may hang separately. Whatever the obstacles, political or technical or both, in the way of a fully operative alliance between the three powers, they must be overcome ere the black sun rises to usher in a Nazi summer. The snows on the Russian battlefields and the ice on the northern routes will soon thaw. Decision must be sought, everywhere in the world, in the long days and short months that are ahead of us.

Ships for Our Offensive

BY DONALD W. MITCHELL

LIEUTENANT COLONEL KERNAN'S "Defense Will Not Win the War" has fallen in with the popular mood. People are at last becoming aware of the danger of thinking only in terms of defense. However, in this volume as elsewhere there is little or no realization of the factors that have impeded offensive action.

The difficulty of the task of transportation and supply rather than any mistaken preference for defensive warfare has been the principal cause of our failure to take a more active role in the present war. Munitions from the "arsenal of democracy" have to be sent to every battle front, and the problem of logistics involved finds no parallel in previous wars. Our loss of the Far East was mainly due to our inability to surmount the obstacle of distance with sufficient rapidity.

Today the United Nations' merchant tonnage is being spread so thin by the demands of war in many areas that even vital needs are not being adequately cared for. Despite the fact that for probably eight months ship construction has outstripped submarine sinkings, the food situation in England has steadily grown worse. More important, we have succeeded in fulfilling only about half of our comparatively modest commitments to Russia under Lend-Lease. And if we are to win the war, our shipments to Russia as well as to other fields must be rapidly expanded. For these reasons any Axis threat to our sea lanes is extremely serious. Recent sinkings, particularly in the Atlantic, have gone far beyond the nuisance stage.

Despite official silence on the subject, no genuine mystery is attached to the successes of the U-boats along our own eastern coast. They are mainly due to the surprisingly large number of enemy submarines engaged in the effort, the insufficient number of defensive warships available, especially plane carriers and destroyers, and the great areas which must be patrolled by inadequate forces. The inadequacy of the forces at our disposal has in turn resulted from the necessity of restoring to the Pacific enough naval strength to give us a reasonably strong position as regards Japan.

Though the navy is saying very little about it, the improvement of aerial detecting devices which apparently operate on the same principle as the hydrophone should make aerial patrol by big bombers increasingly effective. Freighters have, no doubt, been too careless in neglecting such precautions as proceeding without lights, zigzag steering, and camouflage. If necessary, we can restrict shipping to certain lanes which can be

patrolled or require merchant ships to go into harbors at night. Arming them will help, but it requires time. In case of absolute necessity patrols could be withdrawn and the same ships used for convoy duty. We have been reluctant to consider convoys largely because their use reduces the speed of individual vessels and the resulting delays are equal to rather large shipping losses. As a larger number of warships and patrol planes becomes available, the depredations of U-boats can probably be brought well within control.

Another threat is offered to our northern supply line to Russia by powerful German surface raiders capable of wiping out an entire convoy. Shipping in Norwegian waters will doubtless have to be escorted by capital ships or plane carriers until these raiders can be destroyed.

Partly because of the immense distances of the Pacific Japanese submarines and surface raiders have not—since Pearl Harbor—attained any striking success. A greater peril to our supply line to Australia is constituted by the Japanese island bases immediately to the north, from which aerial raiders can take off. The activities of our carrier-cruiser striking forces in these areas have evidently disrupted Japanese plans for their use, but until these "stationary aircraft carriers" are in American possession they will continue to be a menace. Once in our hands and rearmed, their threat will be turned against Japan. A bolder course of action in the Pacific upon the part of our navy would probably have produced better results.

Allied communications with India and the Near East are also threatened. Until Japan has obtained naval bases closer than Singapore it can hardly hope to cut off such trade completely, but it can seriously hamper it by sending cruisers and other warships into this zone. One task of our Pacific fleet should be to keep the Japanese sufficiently busy to prevent their sending more than an occasional raider into the Indian Ocean.

It would be ironical indeed if the war were lost for lack of ships, for in few fields of the war effort have we achieved greater results, after overcoming initial obstacles. Two years ago naval shipbuilding was the concern of three separate overlapping bureaus. Blunders, red tape, lack of cooperation, and interminable squabbles held up completions. Charles Edison, whose work as Secretary of the Navy has been generally underestimated, consolidated the offending bureaus and enacted other salutary reforms. Early rather than delayed delivery is now the rule. However, warship building under the best conditions is such a tedious process that only moderate strengthening of our navy for a three-ocean

war can be looked for in 1942, with a somewhat greater increase in 1943. For some time, then, ships will continue to be spread out too thin for the best results.

Merchant shipbuilding presents a similar picture. After preliminary failure to grasp the magnitude of the tonnage needed to defeat the Axis, our war planners adopted a program very nearly or entirely adequate to probable needs. Between the early fall of 1941 and March, 1942, the building schedule for 1942 and 1943 was increased from 17,000,000 to 22,000,000 tons. When it is recalled that the nearly 5,000,000 tons we turned out in 1919 was regarded as an industrial miracle, the full import of present plans is apparent. Shortages of certain types of machinery and skilled labor, reluct-

ance on the part of both management and labor to use the 168-hour work week, and racial discrimination have prevented our getting the greatest success theoretically possible. Nevertheless, the planning of the Maritime Commission has been of a high grade, and we are now reaping the benefit in the standardized but well-designed merchantmen being launched in quick succession at more than two hundred shipyards.

A full-fledged offensive is of course completely dependent upon this shipping program, and completions in 1942 will not be sufficient to enable us to undertake one. We should, however, be supplied with enough ships and troops for diversion or nuisance attacks, and possibly we can gain footholds to be exploited later.

Can Lewis Wreck the C. I. O.?

BY JAMES A. WECHSLER

JOHN L. LEWIS has submitted his bill to the C. I. O.; the angry, eloquent leader who directed labor's great rebirth has become a nagging creditor. Refusing to pay the per capita tax of the United Mine Workers for March and April, he has demanded that the C. I. O. instead deduct the sum from its "debt" to the Lewis treasury. The move dramatizes the complete estrangement between the C. I. O.'s ex-president and the organization he once ruled. It is also an undignified afterthought. The so-called debt consists of funds which the United Mine Workers contributed to C. I. O. organizing campaigns. The money was never recorded as a loan on the C. I. O. books. Lewis himself said to the last A. F. of L. convention held before the C. I. O. was formed, "Why not make a contribution to the well-being of those who are not fortunate enough to be members of your organization? The labor movement is organized upon the principle that the strong shall help the weak." That was seven years ago. Now Philip Murray leads the C. I. O., and Lewis, supported by yes-men, plug-uglies, and his relatives, wages undercover war against it.

There is a danger that Lewis's increasingly bitter struggle with Murray, and with the overwhelming majority of C. I. O. leaders supporting Murray, will be viewed by the public as merely another personal clash in the long record of labor rows. George Sokolsky says the only problem is whether Lewis or Murray will get the workers' dough. Yet this conflict is in some ways more deep-seated than the one which brought the C. I. O. into existence. The issue dividing Lewis from the C. I. O. is the issue of labor's role in war time—whether unions should fight a sniping, rear-guard action against real and imagined evils in the war effort or seek leadership

and responsibility in the struggle against the Axis. As an unreconstructed Roosevelt-hater and an old isolationist, Lewis must pursue the first course. He may buy a hatful of defense bonds and pledge allegiance to the flag, but he cannot tolerate a full partnership with the Administration—and F. D. R. This feeling was the source of his original conflict with Murray.

For a short time after Pearl Harbor it looked as if Lewis were prepared to make peace with the C. I. O. and to effect some sort of truce with the White House. He paid his pious respects to the war effort. He participated attentively in the labor-industry peace conference which created the War Labor Board. Murray was visibly hopeful that his former boss would at last accept the role of loyal associate. Murray left Washington for a badly needed vacation; on his way back he saw a newspaper which brought him his first word of Lewis's sudden move for "labor unity" in January. In his caucuses with certain A. F. of L. leaders Lewis had assured them that Murray was aware of his plan to reunite labor, with George Meany, secretary-treasurer of the A. F. of L., as nominal head and with Lewis as kingmaker. Murray knew nothing of the scheme except what he read in the newspapers. The episode shattered any plans for peace between Lewis and the C. I. O.

Now the battleground steadily enlarges. Lewis agents within the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee are trying to arouse opposition to Murray's leadership in advance of the S. W. O. C. convention in May. Lewis emissaries in the automobile workers' union are trying to exploit resentment over the C. I. O.'s abandonment of premium pay for week-end work. Murray sympathizers within the United Mine Workers are being sent

to the guillotine; a "commission" has been appointed to "investigate" the affairs of District 17, led by Van A. Bittner, a long-time ally of Lewis's who refused to join the conspiracy against Murray. A whispering campaign against Murray spreads through the U. M. W. Lewis men are also active in the farm areas and many other unorganized territories; the fantastic growth of District 50, the division of the U. M. W. which Lewis, through a combination of nepotism and strong-arm tactics, is building into a minor empire for himself, was described in *The Nation* recently by Will Chasan and Victor Riesel. Gunmen and "strong boys" filter into the Lewis pay rolls as veteran organizers desert to Murray. The United Construction Workers' Organizing Committee, led by A. D. Lewis, recruits florists, laundrymen, and restaurant workers. It has been involved in more jurisdictional squabbles than any other C. I. O. union.

There is little likelihood that Lewis can effectively undermine Murray's grip on the S. W. O. C. or on the Automobile Workers. In important areas of the United Mine Workers also Murray commands deeper allegiance than Lewis among the men in the pits—if not among those who count the ballots. Yet the cumulative effect of these far-flung Lewis projects is not to be minimized. Some labor leaders say that Lewis will become a real threat only in the event of major post-war turmoil. But as a "diversion" from the urgent business of war, as a perpetual and insistent challenge, Lewis is an important character now. He remains only nominally in the C. I. O. His agents in Illinois, led by Ray Edmundson, have severed all connection with the state C. I. O. council, and similar moves are imminent in other states. Lewis's final break with the C. I. O. will depend on whether he can most effectively promote a new Lewis-run movement from inside or outside the organization.

Outwardly Lewis's status today recalls his desolate situation in 1932, when his chief claim to press notices was his support of Herbert Hoover's candidacy. But the weapons now at his command are the weapons which any "oppositionist" holds in war time if he is prepared to play recklessly, if he has money, and if he has imagination. Murray has undertaken a labor leader's most difficult task—to spur the full prosecution of the war without being buried in the process, to steer a course between the necessary sacrifices which labor must make and the exorbitant demands which labor-baiters will seek to impose. But the shadow of Lewis lies across his desk, a reminder that "Big John" is prepared to exploit every retreat and compromise.

Labor's relations with the War Labor Board dramatize the problem. The survival of this board is vital to industrial peace. It is headed by men who are prepared to give labor as equitable a hearing as it could get from any other group that could be assembled. The most serious case before it involves "Little Steel," in which

the S. W. O. C. is demanding a dollar-a-day pay increase and a union security agreement. If the board's decision is less than favorable to the union, Murray will face the same terrible dilemma as in the captive-mine case. There are few disputes in which the case for union security seems as strong in the light of the companies' past records; will Murray be forced to proclaim again that labor can expect only mistreatment in the mediation setup?

Labor's withdrawal from the board would precipitate at once the enactment of drastic anti-labor legislation in Congress. It would destroy the one instrument which offers any real hope of industrial-labor amity during the war. Yet if Murray suffers defeat in this case—and takes it—Lewis agents will at once carry the word to the steel towns. And even if Murray wins in Little Steel, there will be another time when he will lose. Whatever the case, the issue will remain the same, and Lewis's power of disruption will remain intact. The *United Mine Workers' Journal* has already jibed belligerently at the War Labor Board and joined in the reactionary clamor for a "national labor policy." The truth is that any "national labor policy" enacted by Congress now would be aggressively anti-labor.

In larger terms it is apparent that Murray is genuinely seeking to give labor a full sense of participation in the production effort. He is visualizing an expanded industrial democracy designed not to promote narrow labor interests but to insure maximum national effort. The President has encouraged this trend; Donald Nelson has underwritten it by calling for labor-management committees. As labor takes up this role, it faces mounting sacrifices. Surrender of week-end premium pay is not the last that will be required before this war ends. Every time production—not selfish employer interest—demands some concession by labor, Lewis will say, "I told you so." And as long as the sacrifices seem unequal, as long as price control and profit curbs are shadow rather than substance, Lewis's hand will remain strong. Didn't he prophesy that war would enslave labor? And isn't he the only major labor chief not plainly identified with the war effort?

So the outlines of Lewis's grand strategy take shape. His "underground" movement will harry the C. I. O. leaders, but he may avoid a head-on collision until they force his hand or until his lines have been reformed. There is little disposition in the C. I. O. to precipitate the showdown now. At the recent meeting of the executive board the issue of the per-capita tax was dropped into the lap of Murray, James B. Carey, and the six vice-presidents; the rowdy and irresponsible behavior of the Construction Workers' Organizing Committee did not come up. The decisive conflict may occur at the convention of the S. W. O. C., provided Lewis agents can elect enough delegates to make any noise there. It may come

within the U. M. W. if Bittner resists his execution and Murray is prepared to risk a struggle in the mines. Signs of the approaching storm are clear, but its arrival may be a matter of days or of months.

In the meantime Lewis, still an adroit campaigner, carries on his "war of nerves." He has delivered no public orations since Pearl Harbor and held only one press conference, at which he blandly ducked all questions about his future plans except those for the organization of farmers. The District 50 newspaper ran a cartoon which showed Lewis emerging through the clouds to rescue the oppressed; the same newspaper likened attacks on him to the persecution suffered by Christ. All this is presumably a build-up for the Second Coming of John L. Lewis.

Lewis's chance of recapturing supremacy remains slender; the possibility that he may create widespread havoc is great. His behavior, however, is partially, if inadvertently, responsible for the most hopeful development now taking place—the growing cooperation of A. F. of L. and C. I. O. leaders in the "War Labor Cabinet." Created to offset Lewis's one-man "unity" offensive, this cabinet has achieved real and significant

success. It has formulated joint A. F. of L.—C. I. O. policy on wage-freezing and on man-power mobilization; more important, it has slowly healed many of the deep wounds of labor's civil war. One member of the group said to me: "We've agreed not to discuss organic unity yet, but we're moving in that direction. It's like a man and woman who have separated and then begin to see each other again; they want to be damn sure it will work before they start living together again."

Lewis's current offensive is certain to hasten this process. Although he still maintains a powerful ally in A. F. of L. councils—William L. Hutcheson, czar of the Carpenters—the Lewis-Hutcheson axis has been enormously weakened by the achievements of the War Labor Cabinet. It was Hutcheson who worked most closely with Lewis in fashioning the abortive "unity" plot; now unity can come only through the Murray-Green cabinet. This may prove the final answer to Lewis's challenge. Meanwhile, Murray's most effective course is the prosecution of a vigorous war program. If labor becomes unified in time, and if it obtains a decisive place in the war councils, Lewis may come under the heading of a remote post-war problem.

Peace with Hitler's Generals?

BY LUDWIG LORE

OF ALL the mistakes the democratic Allies have made in the war, the greatest has been their reliance on the internal weakness of the Axis. We no longer believe, as did the men about Chamberlain, that the blockade will move the German people to overthrow their despotic Führer, and the voices of the "experts" who saw the Axis strangled by its lack of oil and coal and iron and food have all but subsided, but we still grasp eagerly at every new suggestion of disunity in the Third Reich.

The struggle between Hitler and the old Reichswehr leaders, the most commonly advanced reason for hope, is not a personal conflict. Nor is it fundamentally a struggle for power. In their aims the Führer and the generals are united, and to believe that the latter would voluntarily take their stand with the democracies against Hitler's pan-Germanism is a dangerous delusion. They differ from him only in their evaluation of the means by which the end is to be achieved. They are the products of the First World War, and because they have not forgotten its lessons, they ask for a reasonable guaranty of success before striking a new blow. Above all, they are military men who resent Hitler's reliance on extra-military measures.

Otto Strasser, Hitler's famous antagonist, declares in his recent book, "Germany Tomorrow," that many of the essentials for a revolutionary situation exist—widespread active and passive dissatisfaction with the existing government, fear of defeat in spite of military victories, and the possibility of creating a united front of independents, majority Socialists, Democrats, Centrists, German Nationalists, Strasser Black Frontists, Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and dissatisfied capitalists. Admit for the sake of argument that the leaders of all these groups could be persuaded to pool their forces in an all-out fight against Hitler. Admit also that the National Socialist Party contains serious critics of Hitler who, given time, might gain enough strength and influence to destroy its solidity. And admit further that Hitler and his closest aides might be removed by some coup. What chance of success would a revolt have?

Most of us accept the thesis that Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, and even France are powerless to break the hold of the Nazi conquerors without outside help. But the Germans are the victims of a conquest even more cruel and complete. At present the National Socialist Party of Greater Germany is a compact body of at least two and a half million men and women organized

in cells and local groups, in city, district, and national organizations, and in the S. A. and S. S. guards. This huge apparatus is not an extra-governmental instrument. It is the government itself. Hitler's rule of Germany is so much a part of the daily life of the masses that it can proceed on its own momentum, guided by a bureaucracy of more than a million persons. These officials—the thousands of little Hitlers who owe their jobs to the party—are the pillars of the regime. Without them it would crash under its own weight. And this bureaucracy has committed so many crimes in Hitler's name that it must, in its own interests, oppose any and every change in the nation's political structure.

The social and political lives of all Germans are so thoroughly controlled by the many interlocking organizations into which they have been regimented by terror, bribery, and cajolery that the development of an effective revolutionary group has become all but impossible. In the last World War the German masses had the Social Democratic Party and the trade unions and a comparatively free press; these became the foundations for a new existence when the empire collapsed. Today no such sources of leadership exist. Wilhelm Sollman, a well-known Socialist leader in pre-Hitler Germany, not long ago reminded us that not too much should be expected from German labor in any case. Middle-class elements, hopeless peasants, and disillusioned intellectuals, he declared, are much more likely to rebel than the organized workers, whose pre-Hitler training made for the creation of efficient union executives and political reformists rather than of revolutionary heroes.

It is certainly doubtful, to say the least, whether the German people want Hitler overthrown as long as he leads them from victory to victory, whether even those who dislike the Nazis feel that defeat would be preferable to Hitler's iron rule. We must remember that the German people are incredibly ignorant of what is happening in this war. The majority really believe that the Austrian people called in the Nazis to save them from Schuschnigg, that the Germans in the Sudetenland were slaughtered by the Czechs, that the Poles were at the point of invading the Reich. The underground movement, which tried for a while to dispel their ignorance and organize the nation for resistance, has broken down; what little is left has neither plan nor direction.

Could the army leaders persuade the German people to rise against Hitler and his all-powerful Gestapo in order to put an end to the war? Would the army itself survive this revolution? The German generals harbor no illusions. They know that even if starting a revolution were conceivable, no person on earth could predict its outcome. The Russian revolution of November, 1917, and the German revolution of 1918 are classic examples of the unpredictability of mass reaction to a revolutionary situation. The generals know also that the first sign

of revolution in the Reich would bring open rebellion in the conquered countries. No peace negotiations which did not accept the policing of Germany and the rest of Europe by Allied soldiers until "stable conditions" were restored could stave off the vengeance of the oppressed.

But even if the cards were less obviously stacked against them, what could one expect—have Germany's generals ever shown outstanding courage? Examine the record since 1918. It is a story of patient cunning and deception. They deserted the Kaiser and allowed the German "revolution" to take its course, maintaining themselves in power behind the scenes by political trickery. When they did strike a blow against the republic—in the Kapp putsch in 1920 and in the Hitler-Ludendorff-Brauhaus putsch of 1923—they abandoned the fight at the slightest show of resistance. In the years that followed they built up the influence of the Reichswehr by a thousand small political maneuvers; they were successful not because they were courageous and determined, but because their democratic opponents were torn between the desire for internal peace and the equally strong desire to make Germany powerful again.

The old Reichswehr leaders have always hated Hitler and all he stood for, but they have never seriously challenged his rule. In 1933 they could have overthrown him. The democratic masses would have followed them to a man. But they preferred to let him take over. Indeed, I doubt whether, even today, the German generals



"We're supposed to be there before the Congressional elections."

would know what to do with the German government, were it by some freak of fortune to fall into their hands. Their role has always been, and still is, a silent, tenacious, and unscrupulous struggle for self-preservation. They will fight for power within the framework of the Nazi state, but they will remain loyal to Hitler as long as they are the pampered pets of the Nazi regime.

This is not pessimism. Hitler's collapse lies written in the pages of German history, but Nazi Germany's destruction will be the work of its own hands. For it has all happened before. Prussian Germany's capitulation in 1806, after the Battle of Jena, has mystified historians as much as it surprised Napoleon's marshals. The German army had met no real defeat. The Battle of Jena was a single incident—not even on Prussian soil. But the news of the surrender broke the back of German resistance. The fortress of Hameln surrendered to a troop of second-rate foreign hirelings fighting under the French flag when its commanders received a false report that Stettin had fallen. Stettin, Spandau, Küstrin, and Danzig followed. It was an unparalleled collapse.

It happened again in 1918. Observers of the German *Zusammenbruch* have described the orgies of defeatism that swept the German ranks. General Ludendorff, the "strong man" of the German army, bombarded his reluctant government with telegrams urging immediate peace negotiations and fled to Sweden before the armistice was declared; soldiers and sailors in Kiel raised the red flag and proclaimed the revolution. Yet at that moment Germany's military situation was anything but desperate. True, the Allied army under Foch had won a victory which completely disorganized the German front in Flanders, but no enemy had yet set foot on German soil. Conditions at home were bad, but not nearly so tragic as they were to become two years later when the people of Germany bowed unprotestingly to a government-manufactured inflation. It was simply that the magic spell of the German army's invincibility had been broken. Thousands of soldiers deserted and made their way home, plundering supply trains for food, spreading terror over devastated France and Belgium in a veritable paroxysm of defeat. More than one officer of the old school committed suicide in the face of this incredible self-abasement.

That is the price the Germans will have to pay again. The peasant folk of the Balkans and the democracies of Scandinavia and the Low Countries can survive defeat. But dictatorships feed on success; defeat means destruction. Dimly the German people see the fate that awaits them, and their hearts are filled with foreboding. They are tired of their exhausting burdens, but they know that the peoples of Europe regard them with loathing and would have to be superhuman not to visit their wrath upon them if they were to admit defeat. So they fight on. The day of defeat will come when a series of setbacks

releases the latent forces of opposition in a wave of unrestrained surrender. When that day comes, the German generals may sign the armistice treaty, but they must not be allowed to negotiate the peace. A peace that recognizes the power of Hitler's partners in this struggle could only be the prelude to another war.

In the Wind

WASHINGTON IS STIRRING with plans for the fall Congressional elections. In order to maintain national unity during the campaign it has been proposed to set up a national elections committee led jointly by a Republican and a Democrat. Presumably the committee's purpose would be to confine the debate as much as possible to local issues and to urge on all candidates full support of the war program. At a recent meeting of political leaders in the capital the two men suggested to head the committee were Wendell Willkie and Al Smith.

IN THE MARCH NUMBER of *Architectural Forum* are photographs and plans of an airplane-engine factory whose location is given only as somewhere in the Middle West. On another page of the magazine the same plant is shown in an advertisement and its address is given.

THE LOS ANGELES C. I. O. has banned the sale of left-wing anti-war papers—the *Socialist Call*, *Labor Action*, and others—inside headquarters and on the street outside.

THE NATIONAL SINARQUIST UNION, Mexican counterpart of the Christian Front, has issued a long statement urging all countries in the Western Hemisphere to cooperate. This windy homage to solidarity, however, says nothing of what the Americas should cooperate for—except "to combat Communist propaganda."

LEND-LEASE OFFICIALS have discovered that shipments to Russia have frequently been tampered with before leaving American ports. Tanks and airplanes have arrived in the Soviet Union with vital parts missing, and cargoes have been so badly loaded that they shifted and forced the ships to put back to port. It is suspected that much of the meddling is done by Coughlinites, who are numerous among the long-shoremen in some coastal cities.

G. E. R. GEDYE, formerly Central European correspondent of the *New York Times*, was reported a month ago to be a prisoner in Turkey, on charges of conspiracy in the von Papen bombing incident. Gedye is not a prisoner and was never arrested. . . . Another story, printed in this column and elsewhere, reported that Harper's would not publish Gedye's book on his experiences in Russia. The publishers report that the book has not been suppressed; it has merely been postponed because the manuscript has not yet arrived in this country.

[We invite our readers to submit material for *In the Wind*. A prize of \$5 will be awarded each month for the best item.]

BOOKS *and the* ARTS

"NEW YORKER" FICTION

BY LIONEL TRILLING

RECENTLY, reading Fielding and Dickens again, I was struck by the change that our time has brought about in the relation of writer and reader. The old literary relation was a "polite" one—literature was assumed to be a means of social intercourse, the reader and writer were supposed to be aware of each other as friends engaged in a matter of common interest. But since the end of the nineteenth century there has grown up a competing—and by now largely victorious—assumption according to which literature is thought to be not so much a social as a scientific or religious activity; the reader, though permitted to be present at the research or ritual, is naturally not to be noticed.

One of the indications of the changed attitude is the decrease in lightness and humor in work which pretends to seriousness. The contrivance of a comic incident and the turning of a witty phrase are in effect a kind of flattery; they suggest direct notice of the reader, an avowed social effort on the part of the writer. Shaw was perhaps the last great mind to think with laughter and to invite his public to join him. American literature of the past three decades is largely solemn, even lugubrious, and its prose seems to be consciously at war with wit. The scientific and religious assumption has made the social one seem almost frivolous; for example, the important novels of E. M. Forster have never received adequate recognition because their polite, colloquial relation with the reader casts doubt on their seriousness, and a few years ago the pleasant small talent of S. N. Behrman had to advance specious reasons why there is always time for comedy.

It is one of the admirable things about the *New Yorker* magazine that it insists on continuing the old polite tradition of literature. The *New Yorker* is always aware of its readers and knows just who they are—the intelligent, comfortably-fixed, urbane, moral people who dress in good taste, enjoy all the arts but also all the sports, and in their politics are liberal but not rash. This, at any rate, is what we become as we read the *New Yorker*, and if the magazine flatters us by supposing that we are better off or more genteel than in fact we are, it also supposes that we are literate, intelligent, and quietly public-spirited.

And just as Dickens, having established a perfect social communion with his public, introduced into his novels the most withering indictments of the ideas and institutions by which his public lived, the *New Yorker* publishes along with its more genial contents, with its anecdotes, its comic drawings, and its excellent journalism, a kind of short story the main characteristic of which is its great moral intensity. Every week, at the barber's or the dentist's or on the commuting train, a representative part of the middle class learns about the horrors of snobbery, ignorance, and insensitivity and

about the sufferings of children, servants, the superannuated, and the subordinate, weak people of all sorts. From these weekly stories sixty-eight were recently selected for the volume "Short Stories from the *New Yorker*" (Simon and Schuster, \$3); they make one of the most "socially conscious" and one of the most grimly moral books lately published.

There can be no question about the talent of all these stories or about the brilliance of many of them, and their impulse to serious moral judgment is so urgent that to the future historian of the middle class they will inevitably seem documents of prime importance. But perhaps the first thing one remarks when these stories are taken out of their polite setting and brought together in a single volume is that, by some editorial anomaly, they deny the polite tradition the rest of the *New Yorker* maintains. Almost all the authors subscribe to the myth of their personal non-existence or of their merely corporate existence; they are all the same anonymous person, and you feel about them that, just as any scientist might take over another's research or any priest take over another's ritual duty, almost any one of these writers might write another's story in the same cool, remote prose. They all stand at about the same distance from their subject—perhaps Irwin Shaw a little closer than most or John O'Hara a little farther away—and all make similar sharp, sad observations about people with about the same degree of silent objectivity. And somehow, despite their admirable technical skill and despite their high earnestness, their stories have a mortuary quality; they are bright, beautiful, but dead. They all have point, but on that point they seem to impale not only the specimen to be observed but themselves as well.

In some part, perhaps, this effect may be attributed to the length of these stories; they have just room enough to make the sharp perception but not room enough for a play of emotion around it. The perception, to be adequately dramatic within this confining space, must be uncompromising and unmodulated; and because finality is always moving, these stories like to bring life, through some triviality, to a crisis and then a full stop. Even when we have such fine sensibilities as those of Kay Boyle or Louise Bogan, and even when they declare themselves in the service of affirmation, we feel that they have embalmed life for our inspection.

And behind the urgent morality of many of these stories I cannot help suspecting something very like cruelty. It is a peculiarly modern cruelty, unconsciously allied with the humanitarian sentiments and exercising itself by subtle moral perceptions. It is inherent in these stories in varying degrees of complexity, but it appears with a naive simplicity in Dorothy Parker's *Arrangement in Black and White*, of which

the intended point is that a young woman's expressions of liberal "tolerance" for a Negro singer are actually the expressions of her intense snobbery; but certainly the further and concealed point of the story is the great pleasure Miss Parker gets from her pursuit of this easy victim, the moral grandeur she offers her readers at small emotional expense. Surely the clue to the value of these emotions lies in Miss Parker's other story in the collection, in which, comparing herself with a group of Spanish Loyalists, she indulges in the luxury of self-contempt.

All satire has, of course, the pleasure of attack; what keeps the great satirists from cruelty is their open expression of anger, their clear avowal of their pleasure in the attack. But in many of the *New Yorker* stories—for example, in all three of Sally Benson's, in Mark Connolly's, in Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings's, in Mark Schorer's, in Tess Slesinger's, in Benedict Thielen's, even in Sherwood Anderson's (it is significantly unlike his characteristic work)—the authors avow nothing; indeed, in their defense of virtue they do not condescend to attack at all, they merely lay traps of situation into which the doomed characters must inevitably fall. In these stories immorality is exposed not by the author's aggression but by the character's unwariness; the author allows us to view the result but disclaims all responsibility, having made clear by his style that he is not really a person at all.

Most of the stories in "Short Stories from the *New Yorker*" are serious; but something of the same effect appears in the comic stories too. Arthur Kober, for example, writes his Bronx chronicles—they are collected in "My Dear Bella" (Random House, \$2)—with a detachment so great as to be almost an animus. For a writer to withdraw so much of his feeling from his characters is to leave them shivering and naked; for Kober to record without comment and with so little expressed emotion the turns of speech and the tricks of behavior of his people is not to refrain from judgment but to make a judgment of contempt. And in Kober's case it results in a kind of inaccuracy; his method seems to accommodate nothing but the pettiness and ill-temper of his Jews, and Daniel Fuchs and Jerome Weidman surpass him in telling the literal truth about a similar group. I find the same unexplained animus in Benedict Thielen's "Stevie" stories (Dial, \$2). In a rather foolish preface in which he assures us that he has higher interests than Stevie, Thielen explains that his ill-natured vulgarian deserves to be written about simply because he exists; but it is not convincing—we want to know why. We do know why Flaubert pursued Bouvard and Pecuchet, and the reasons were large and good. But it is hard to see in Thielen's pursuit of Stevie any other motive than the pure pleasure of mousing.

Three collections of *New Yorker* stories avoid the quality of cruelty which I have referred to. John Collier's "Presenting Moonshine" (Viking, \$2.50) is full of the most ingenious sadism which addresses itself in open and friendly terms to the Perfect Murderer in each of us; it seems to me considerably less fierce than the literature of ingenious moral traps. Sally Benson's "Junior Miss" (Random House, \$2) does not give me the pleasure it gives so many, but I prefer these slight stories to her weightier three in the *New Yorker* anthology; her adolescent girl cannot be written about without some affectionate responsibility. And James Reid

Parker's "Attorneys at Law" (Doubleday, Doran, \$2) is so very explicit in its animus and speaks with so much contemptuous gusto of a world in which immorality is so taken for granted that it is quite without moral ambiguity.

But of the *New Yorker* writers certainly the most gifted and morally the soundest is Ludwig Bemelmans. His "Hotel Splendide" (Viking, \$2.50) contains much of his best work and one of the most successful stories I know, The Magician Entertains the Ballet. Bemelmans is wholly in the old polite tradition. He courts the reader with the wit of his surprising prose, and of all the writers I have mentioned he is the only one who has an affection for his characters. Out of some humility or courage he has no need to speak with the authoritative voice of anonymity; he consents to exist as no more than a person and to admit that it is he, Bemelmans, who is at work.

The result is that his moral judgments are far less intense than his colleagues' but far more just; they are never bleak and desperate; even when they are adverse they are warm and forgiving. It is, I feel, an important aspect of his peculiar moral tone that he alone of the *New Yorker* writers creates a world that is colored, palpable, and full of smells; the others, for all their remarkable sensibility, are not aware of the senses; their perception is ascetic, and their characters, conceived in a kind of worldly puritanism, have no real bodies. But Bemelmans thinks with his senses and allows even his disagreeable characters the privileges of bodily existence, the magician with his stale cakes and passions quite as much as the ballet girls with the lemon slices between their toes and their adoration of Pavlova.

Bemelmans is, in the good sense of the word, a modest talent, possibly not much more than a quaint one. It can scarcely benefit such a talent to inflate it beyond its true proportions, and yet it seems to me that his work is important because in these days its characteristic quality is so rare. Bemelmans, without ever descending to loose emotion and without ever losing his worldliness and his satiric eye, has a kind of healthy contentment with human nature; and in a world in which literary sensibility seems almost to depend upon the frustration of high hopes and to find its easiest expression in bleakness, his work, with its bright humanism, stands as both protest and affirmation.

Winter and Summer

BY STEPHEN SPENDER

Within my head, aches the perpetual winter
Of this violent time, where pleasures freeze.
My inner eye anticipates forever
Looking through naked trees and running wheels
Onto a blank transparent sky
Leading to nothing: as though, through iron aims,
It was stared back at by the filmy surface
Of a lid covering its own despair.
Thus, when the summer breaks upon my face
With the outward shock of a green wave
Crested with leaves and creamy foam of flowers,
I think the luxurious lazy meadows
Are a deceiving canvas covering

With a balmy paint of leafy billows
 The furious volleys of careering power
 Behind the sun, racing to destroy.
 And under light lawns, heavy in their soil,
 I hear the groaning of the wasted lives
 Of those who revolve unreflecting wheels.
 Alas, I prove that I am right,
 For if my shadowed mind let in the light
 It would return to those green foolish years
 When to live seemed to stand knee-deep in flowers.
 The winter was an indoor accident
 When, with head pressed against the glass, I watched
 The garden falsified by snow
 Waiting to melt and become real again.

The Indispensable Century

KINGS AND DESPERATE MEN: LIFE IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND. By Louis Kronenberger. Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.50.

MANY seem to regard the eighteenth century as many seem to regard women—that is, exclusively as a subject for generalization. No doubt one does occasionally hear that the thirteenth century was this or the seventeenth was that, just as one does, occasionally, hear that “men, generally speaking, are . . .” But women and the eighteenth are much more often summed up in a phrase, even though the phrases are by no means compatible. The century is at times the Age of Reason and at times the Age of Sentimentality. Once the whipping horse of romantics, it later became the object of a Bloomsbury cult, to be thought of as full of proto-Sitwells; and one actual Sitwell did something which neither Lady Mary nor any of her female contemporaries seem ever to have managed to do—namely, fall in love with Alexander Pope. It is also, of course, the Age of Brutality, as well as, less frequently, the Age of Humanitarianism. Perhaps it was actually the Indispensable Century, and at least many seem to have found it such, but its denizens were certainly, like women, also people. They did not always agree with one another in opinion, taste, or temperament, and even at this late date some of them, say Dr. Johnson and Horace Walpole, are really quite easy to tell apart.

Perhaps one of the chief virtues of Mr. Kronenberger's extremely entertaining and often brilliantly written book arises out of the fact that he so thoroughly realizes all this and has described, or rather illustrated, not the eighteenth century of this or that person's wishful imagination but as much of its variety as could well be got into a bit over 300 pages. He pretends to no primary research, and his method is neither that of chronological history nor of isolated essays on a group of figures, but rather something in between, namely, not quite isolated treatments of typical figures, classes, and types of activity. Moreover, the method works better than one would perhaps be inclined to anticipate. The book is picturesque, rich, and varied without being scrappy; and, indeed, I do not know where one would find in equally modest compass a more informative or better-written presentation of a fascinating subject.

Mr. Kronenberger obviously admires the century he has

chosen to write about more than he cares to admit or perhaps is even himself aware. With amusing persistence he denies its right to its renown and then, willy-nilly, builds up that renown again. He speaks of “that Augustan Age, which enjoys a reputation far from its merits” and again remarks that “the Age of the Augustans, stamped for two centuries as dignified and elegant, was in truth as noisily quarrelsome an era as history will reveal.” “Bath had pomp and elegance and a kind of magnificent dulness, and they are preserved in its stone and its gardens and its crescents. . . . But Bath dear to sentimentalists, a city ripe for gaiety and pleasure, very likely never existed.” He even quotes with approval Lytton Strachey's judgment on the Johnson of the “Lives”: “Johnson's aesthetic judgments are almost invariably subtle, or solid, or bold; they have always some good quality to recommend them—except one: they are never right.” All these pronouncements except the last are not only defensible but perhaps just. Yet the century remains a subject which Mr. Kronenberger, like most of its students, finds fascinating. It was so magnificently competent in achieving its own ends, however little it seemed to care about others which we may find worthier.

What shocks Mr. Kronenberger most is what shocks nearly every modern—that is, the calm acceptance of an unspeakable degradation at the bottom of society, a degradation which not even tender-hearted people like Samuel Johnson thought it possible to relieve except by individual acts of charity. But Dr. Johnson was typical in harboring a deep-rooted and sincere, rather than merely comfortable or hard-hearted, conviction that the human lot is not subject to radical improvement, and this conviction is perhaps related to the fact that—here comes the inevitable generalization—the eighteenth century was, of all centuries, the one which had the least interest in any sort of transcendentalism, whether in religion or art or philosophy. If in our own age the key words of disparagement include “unjust,” “cruel,” and “unimaginative,” the key words of disparagement were then “enthusiastic,” “visionary,” and “fanatic.” And whoever brought schemes for the remaking of art or religion or society was forthwith suspected of being all these things. The age had its visionaries; some of them began movements which bore later fruit; but Mr. Kronenberger himself cannot admire them, as he admires less admirable men, since they were not, like these latter, so magnificently what they were. The eighteenth-century garden was a very formal and very restricted one. Its keepers paid a penalty for being resolved to stay in it. But when one contemplates political nationalism, romantic-decadent art, and the mystical religion of race, one can hardly deny that we also have paid a penalty for exploring the wilderness.

Two other things, one minor and one major, should be credited to Mr. Kronenberger's book. The first is a group of unhackneyed illustrations. The second is a wittily compressed style in which epigrammatic expression is used not so much for the purpose of getting something off as in order to make generalization memorable rather than dull. Having space for only one example I choose this: “Walpole's merit is that he made England prosper: his vice, that he made England value prosperity too much.”

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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Modern Age Books, 245 5th Ave., N. Y. C.

The Goals of Democracy

STRATEGY FOR DEMOCRACY. By J. Donald Kingsley and David N. Petegorsky. Longmans, Green and Company. \$3.

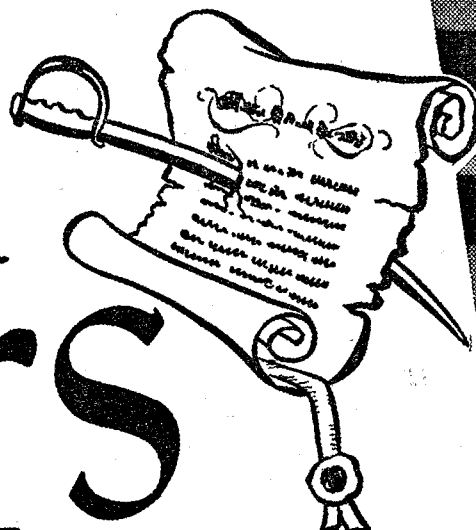
IN THIS volume Mr. Kingsley, the able editor of the *Antioch Review*, and, Mr. Petegorsky, a young man who has recently established himself as a social philosopher by his admirable history of the radical sects of the Cromwellian period, have made a comprehensive survey of the problems of democratic civilization and sought to define our foreign and domestic goals. They see the problems in terms which will appeal to most readers of this journal. With the assistance of Pierre Cot, Max Werner, Albert Guérard, Oscar Janowsky, and Mordecai Ezekiel, each of whom contributes one chapter, they explore the complexity of the world crisis.

They believe that we cannot win the war without a unified military and political strategy and that an adequate political strategy requires a more resolute democratic purpose in both foreign and domestic policy. Every chapter of the book contains counsels which true democrats will receive gratefully. When the authors explode the theory of the "managerial revolution," the theory of an oligarchy which will manipulate society with no other power or authority than that which inheres in its managerial techniques, they will be hailed with special gratitude.

The book is the first real attempt in America to state the goals of democracy in both domestic and foreign terms, and it contains so much that is good that it seems ungenerous to be critical. Nevertheless, honesty compels the recognition of some obvious defects. Sometimes a confusion of counsel is offered by the various contributors, a weakness which symposiums seldom avoid. Mordecai Ezekiel, for instance, looks forward to a post-war world in which the hiatus between production power and consumption power will be bridged primarily by adequate taxation policies, and he declares that "if measures of this type are not sufficient to close the gap between goods made and goods sold, direct government expenditures can be used to make up the remainder in the deficit of buying power." Other chapters assume that radical changes in the property system will be required to cure modern society of its malady; and they even envisage the possibility of rather stubborn counter-revolutionary movements against the proposed changes. This debate is inconclusive and unsatisfactory because conflicting views are not brought to grips with each other.

Some of the authors fail to define their program with sufficient precision. Pierre Cot's chapter on international organization is the most obvious example of this weakness. He looks forward to "some federative organization in which the national states will lose their sovereign rights and attributes, so that they will become primarily cultural and administrative centers with local governmental functions." That is a pretty large order. The complete abridgment of national sovereignty means the creation of a real superstate. But the specifications for such a state are not given. We are told that it will be "built upon the foundations of regionalism," but we do not learn whether it is the regional or the world organization which will be the primary locus of power and sovereignty. Nor is the relation between

Ten Years



The World on its Way to War, 1930-1940

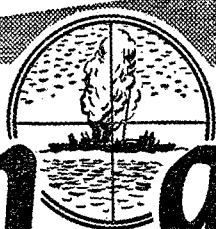
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regional and world organization quite so simple as M. Cot seems to assume. A federated Europe, for instance, would probably be dominated by Germany and would not find it easy to integrate two quasi-continental powers, Russia and Britain, into its political mechanism. Since these would be the two victorious powers in the event of a German defeat, it is rather plausible to assume that it is going to be easier to create a world organization than a European superstate. We cannot foresee the post-war organization of the world with any clarity, but we ought at least to know which of the various possibilities are compatible with each other.

The chapters written by the two authors occasionally betray a tendency to maintain certain pet dogmas of the left without the reexamination which the tragic history of the past era might well have prompted. One example must suffice. We are told that "the labor unions can become the driving force of a dynamic progressive organization that will have the strength, the courage, and the statesmanship to undertake the far-reaching transformation of our social order that alone can solve the problems we confront. Can such a movement enlist the support of the middle classes, the professional and agrarian elements which will be so vital to its success? . . . We believe that it can."

The authors are aware of the tendency of trade unions to lose political perspective in the day-to-day struggle for hours and wages within the present framework; but they attribute this weakness to the mood which a period of expansion prompted. The tendency of trade unions to forgo political tasks in favor of more immediate and limited economic objectives is a more serious hazard to economic reconstruction than the authors admit. The man who is making history for the British left at the moment is a middle-class intellectual who was outlawed by the British trade-union movement only a few years ago.

But this mistake is not as serious as the idea that it is only necessary to "enlist . . . the support of agrarian elements" for a radical movement, the purposes of which are defined by labor, hoping rather lamely meanwhile that the farmers will forgo their "individualistic traditions." This is to make the old mistake of the industrial left which has helped to betray the agrarians into the arms of reaction in every modern country. The farmer's individualism is something more than a tradition. He sees property primarily in terms of a farm he would like to own, or would like to own without the burden of a mortgage. The worker confronts property as a vast industrial concern in which he has no rights. The difference between agrarian and urban property conceptions is ineradicable. This does not prevent political cooperation for objectives which maximize the common purposes and minimize the differences between farmers and workers. Within a limited sphere the New Deal has proved such cooperation to be possible. But the fact that the property which the worker knows is the cause of his insecurity, while the property which the farmer knows is the hope of his security renders abortive any simple political policy defined by urban industrialism without regard for distinctive agrarian perspectives. The survival of democracy depends upon a statesmanship which harmonizes common purposes without unduly sacrificing legitimate individual interests and values to dominant ones.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

Books and War

THE effect of reading too many headlines or listening too much to the radio, is not only to produce undue jitters on defeats or elations on victories, but also to obscure the larger issues in our war effort. An excellent antidote is for every reader to have as full and complete knowledge as possible of the pattern that underlies daily events. Certain books, including five published currently by Farrar and Rinehart, present facts which have not even been mentioned in newspaper reports and give, each of them, a complete picture of an important aspect of the world front.

For example, only a week before this issue went to press the *New York Times* headlined a report by Brazil's finance minister that "Unity of Americas is now held established." Yet Hitler's penetration of Latin America goes right on—despite the Rio Conference, the blacklisting of German firms, the expulsion of Axis-owned airlines in some countries. In *THE NAZI UNDERGROUND IN SOUTH AMERICA*, Hugo Fernández Artucio, a native Uruguayan who has taken the lead in investigating and exposing the Nazi penetration, shows that thousands of Nazi agents are still at work in every country to the South of us—spreading their propaganda, fomenting political strife, securing property close to airfields and oil lines—all under close direction from Berlin. He shows how the efforts of the Spanish and Italian fascists, and of the Japanese, are coordinated by the Nazis. And despite "hemisphere solidarity" he shows that in some countries the fifth columnists are actually collaborating with government circles and parties.

Artucio's own single-handed exposure of the plot, in June, 1940, to make Uruguay the German "Manchukuo" in Latin America resulted in a sudden marshalling of democratic opinion in that country which resulted in the arrest of the Nazi agents. But Artucio shows that the same job needs to be done in the others, as well. He names names, gives specific locations of Nazi centers. Just one instance—a map shows the location of 43 Nazi-prepared airfields in Colombia within striking distance of the Panama Canal. It need hardly be added that Artucio is no casual visitor; he has been on the ground, has been working on this problem for years and he knows absolutely what he is talking about. For a full understanding of the preparations for attack on us through Latin America, *THE NAZI UNDERGROUND* is required reading.

Until the nations of Europe had fallen one by one, no one would believe the military danger that lay under everyone's eyes to see, and until now no one has had the self-protective curiosity to find out what the Germans intend to do to them, and how they intend to do it. The totalitarian plans

for a totalitarian world are given in *THE AXIS GRAND STRATEGY*, prepared from the official writings of the German military, naval and air officers and originally appearing in German military publications over a period of years. Like *THE NAZI UNDERGROUND*, it supplies the only possible means of defeating our enemies—by understanding their plan of attack in full detail.

Let us not deceive ourselves. The Germans have laid their plans for years in every field of political, economic, military and psychological relations, and they have done it on a world scale. So far they have out-thought as well as out-fought us. We cannot muddle through this war by dealing with each problem as it comes up and with no relation to the others, to the sum of the others. If we do, we will lose either the war, or the peace, or both as surely as Germany conquered France. To see the size of the problem, to realize the caliber of the enemy we must destroy; in short, to find out the steps we must expect and to prepare counter-steps, *THE AXIS GRAND STRATEGY* must be read and assimilated.

MEETING these threats involves not only grand strategy in a military sense, and intensified political-economic action, but defense on the home front. From this standpoint a most valuable book is *CIVILIAN DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES*. It is practically a primer of war for civilians. Its purpose is not only to give the individual the best techniques for protecting himself and his family, but to guide each community in its preparation for meeting sabotage and arson, the evacuation, of civilians, emergency feeding, etc. Health, morale, and labor's part in the war effort are other subjects discussed. This book will be found most helpful by public authorities and by every man or woman who is asking, "What job can I do best? And how shall I go about doing it?"

We are all apt to get discouraged at times at the seeming confusion, the cross-purposes and the conflicting voices that accompany each step of our war effort. The Nazis are working hard to convince us (and have succeeded with some Americans) that this confusion is inescapable with our form of government, that democracies can not act efficiently or unitedly. It is therefore salutary to read a book like Pendleton Herring's *THE IMPACT OF WAR*, which traces the relationship of the country and its military machine. Professor Herring shows conclusively that at every real danger point in our history we have achieved unity, and that we have the seeds in our character and institutions for a far stronger effort than is possible under any totalitarian regimentation. *The New York Herald Tribune* said

of it: "Its history is sound; its political probing is brilliant and imaginative; its economics is bold yet realistic."

ONE reason for the cynicism that prevented our arming effectively before Pearl Harbor was the conviction held by many that "Europe took us for a buggy ride" in the last war. To prevent that happening again, Dr. P. E. Corbett makes a searching examination in *POST-WAR WORLDS* of the basic requirements of peace and international security. *POST-WAR WORLDS* is not a Utopian blueprint of an enthusiastic idealist, but is the result of the hard thinking and experience over the past twenty-five years of leading serious students of international affairs. It is good medicine both for cynicism and for wishful thinking. Some may say, time enough to talk about reconstructing the world when we've won the fight. Well, it isn't going to hurt our fight any to know where we want to go, and it may save us from following down blind alleys in the unpredictable days ahead.

Your bookseller will be glad to show you these books; or we will send any of them postpaid on receipt of purchase price. We will also be glad to send on request, a catalogue of Spring and Summer publications.

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The French Bourgeoisie

THEY CALLED ME CASSANDRA. By Geneviève Tabouis.
Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3.

DEADLINE. By Pierre Lazareff. Random House. \$3.

THESE two memoirs, by French journalists now in exile in the United States, are important because their authors were well situated to observe what went on between 1930 and 1940 in the Parisian bourgeoisie, which was connected with big business and politics.

Geneviève Tabouis and Pierre Lazareff belong to the Paris bourgeoisie by birth, education, and profession. Geneviève Tabouis is a small, frail woman, always ill, whose moral courage is as great as her health is poor. As foreign editor of the paper *L'Oeuvre*, for ten years she denounced the dangers of fascism. She is rightly called Cassandra. On four occasions—at the time of the invasion of Ethiopia, the war in Spain, the Czecho-Slovakian crisis, and the French-Soviet pact—Cassandra Tabouis displayed more clairvoyance than the Prime Ministers of France and England, but her warnings were ignored. Pierre Lazareff became at thirty-three chief editor of *Paris-Soir*, which attained a circulation of 2,000,000 and stood at the head of the French press.

Both are talented journalists; they are not historians whose business is to classify facts or sociologists whose business is to trace the causes of events. Their testimony is limited, for just as New York's Fifth Avenue is not all of America, so the great bourgeoisie of Paris is not all of France. The France of the workers, the farmers, the artisans, and the

thinkers is worth more than that of the Parisian salons and editorial rooms. The evil is that France during the last twenty years was a democracy only in name, subjected to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

It would be unjust, then, to judge France as a whole from the testimony of Mme Tabouis and M. Lazareff. Their books do serve to show up the intellectual and moral decadence of this Parisian bourgeoisie, and they bring us a certain amount of unpublished information which, if correct, permits us to establish more completely the responsibility of the bourgeoisie for the defeat of France. After these general considerations, let us discuss the qualities and faults of the books.

Emigrés are too likely to be told that the American public craves personal and even scandalous anecdotes. Mme Tabouis and M. Lazareff have chosen to gratify the public's taste. This has led them to forget that "*on lave son linge sale en famille*." It has also led them to give exaggerated importance to feminine influence in French politics. To attribute to Mme de Porte and Mme de Crussol the fall of the Daladier Cabinet and the weakness of Paul Reynaud in ceding power to Pétain is little less mistaken than explaining the French Revolution by the coquetries of Marie Antoinette or the Russian Revolution by the perversions of Rasputin. If we believe our authors, French politics were decided in part in the salons of Mmes de Ludre, de la Rochefoucauld, de Porte, de Carbucia, and de Crussol. I spent twelve years in Parliament; I was a minister seven times; yet with the exception of Mme de Crussol, whose lawyer I was at one time and whom I have not seen for several years, I have never known any of these women. And I think that Léon Blum, Marx Dormoy, and many others were in the same position.

Happily there are other qualities in "They Called Me Cassandra" and "Deadline." A specialist in foreign politics, Mme Tabouis was well qualified to judge the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She admires Herriot, Paul-Boncour, and Barthou; she judges Flandin severely, and Pierre Laval and Georges Bonnet even more severely. She exposes the duplicity of Laval, who from 1935 on contributed to the destruction of democracy in France and of collective security in the world and proclaimed his admiration of fascism. She shows Georges Bonnet to be one of the biggest liars in the world, a Machiavellian guided by fear—fear of responsibility and fear of bombs—who, after having engineered the Munich affair, destroyed the Franco-Soviet pact by his agreements with von Ribbentrop and thus assured Hitler the diplomatic situation which he needed to let loose the war. She mentions in passing that since 1935 Marshal Pétain has agreed with the general orientation of the Laval-Bonnet politics.

Having been chief editor of the greatest Parisian paper, Pierre Lazareff is well qualified to describe the functioning of the French press; he performs the task ruthlessly, and his study will enlighten the American public about the unbelievable corruption of that press. He points out that the great French papers, with the exception of certain political journals such as *Le Populaire*, *L'Aube*, or *L'Humanité*, were entirely dominated by industrial and financial interests. He shows these interests as gradually preferring "Hitler to Léon Blum"; according to Lazareff, their views were like-

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AT ALL BOOKSTORES

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wise accepted by the Royalists, who saw in a military defeat the means of getting rid of the republican regime. He reveals, as does Mme Tabouis, the play of German propaganda directed by Otto Abetz and his friends—De Brinon, Jean Luchaire, Philippe Boegner, and others. He underlines the importance of the Cagouard plot formed in 1937 by the industrialists, the army, and the most active elements in fascist organizations; in his last chapter, apropos of the fall of France, he does not hesitate to speak of the "Pétain plot," whose origin dates back to 1936.

By striking examples, by facts of which they have personal knowledge, Mme Tabouis and M. Lazareff expose the steps in the disintegration of the French bourgeoisie. Mme Tabouis reports the statement made by General de Castelnau in 1935; "If there is a war with Italy, we will refuse to fight"; she also informs us that in 1938 two French generals were seriously discussing "the question whether it were not really better for France to be beaten by Hitler than rescued by Stalin."

The most important fault of these books arises from the failure of their authors—a failure common to the greater part of the French bourgeoisie—to know and appreciate the strength of the people. It is not their fault, but it reveals the mind of the bourgeoisie. In these books in which duchesses and marquises are so often discussed, the name of Léon Jouhaux, head of the Confédération Générale du Travail, who in 1937 had more than 6,000,000 followers, is mentioned only once by Mme Tabouis and not once by M. Lazareff.

I shall be told that these books are concerned with only one aspect of France. But because they ignore popular movements, the authors commit errors of sight and of judgment. When they speak of Léon Blum and Daladier, both of whom had their faults as have all men, they are unjust because they forget that Daladier and, especially, Blum represented and still represent, as the Riom trial is now disclosing, the healthiest part of the French nation. Furthermore, M. Lazareff, when he speaks of the events of February 6, 1934, of the Spanish war, and of the Popular Front, is dominated by a curious indulgence toward certain fascists—Chiappe, for example—and by hatred of communism. This is somewhat odd since M. Lazareff reveals to us some "instructions" of the German propaganda office which declare that "the French are to be terrified by the threat of Bolshevism"; he himself falls into the trap whose existence he denies. M. Lazareff does not take into account the fact that if the French masses had been able to impose their will, France would not have been conquered and he would not be in exile.

It is perhaps partly by reason of their gaps and faults that these books by Mme Tabouis and M. Lazareff will contribute to a better understanding of the present situation. The world needs France. But the world cannot have confidence in a France dominated by a bourgeoisie which Mme Tabouis and M. Lazareff show to be corrupt and light-minded. It is to the masses that we must turn if we wish to make France what the Popular Front tried to make it in 1936—a nation "strong, free, and happy." When America understands the French masses it will regain confidence in the French genius.

PIERRE COT

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Stories by Ralph Bates

THE UNDISCOVERABLES AND OTHER STORIES. By Ralph Bates. Random House. \$2.50.

THESE three novelettes are, on the whole, reminders of Ralph Bates's talent rather than additional evidence of it. Only the title story has much of what made "Lean Men" exciting and "The Olive Field" impressive; and even there one finds—as one does far more in the other stories—an unevenness, a lack of sustained power, even a certain ebb and flow of interest. All through the book there is this ebb and flow; one is by turns impressed and irritated, brought close to reality and thrown back into a world of words. There is no want of talent, but there is a decided want of achievement.

Ralph Bates is by nature an intensive writer whose work gets its effect rather by weight than by thrust, whose stories close in from all sides on their subject rather than march forward. In a sense they lack emphasis, the emphasis we are trained to expect—though possibly we are wrong to demand it—of the narrative form. One scene is "bigger" or more climactic than another only because of its content, not because of any more highly orchestrated manner of presenting it. This puts a legitimate but added burden on reader and author alike; because there are no signposts, the reader dare not miss a word, nor the author waste one.

In the title story, although it is hard to work into and has its trying moments thereafter, Mr. Bates is on the whole successful. The Undiscoverables (which was serialized in *The Nation*) tells what happened in a remote Sicilian fishing village a week after Italy entered the present war. It describes the clash between the Fascists who come from the mainland to take over and the natives who resent and oppose them. Ultimately the story centers in the Fascist major who is in charge, the passionately rebellious shepherd who kills and is killed, and the farmer who has become a Fascist underling from poverty and frustration. "Where, in any land," Chiesa tries to justify his defection, "had the peasants ever got an extra mouthful of bread out of broken heads and exiled sons?" But in the end he goes back to his own people, the "undiscoverables," the defiant undercover workers against fascism. In a way *The Undiscoverables* is a more convincing dramatization of the theme of Steinbeck's "The Moon Is Down." Certainly the life of the village—the thoughts and emotions of the villagers, the passion for independence of a primitive people—has an organic force, a pulse and a heart about it, that the Steinbeck story lacks. What prevents the reader from responding as vigorously to the story as he should is his difficulty in absorbing it. It is a little too involved and curiously wrought for a tale of fear and hate and violence; and it certainly isn't helped by bits of prose like "If Chiesa was playing cunning or playing wary he was overplaying in that suggesting readiness to discuss his going to the farm."

The other two stories, though not without interest of their kind, don't come off. *The Burning Corn*, a Mexican story of violence and treachery, of a primitive community in the early stages of enlightenment, of revolution and human beings and a marital relationship, lacks, for me at least, a center; it is enough like *The Undiscoverables* in impulse and subject

matter to reveal its marked inferiority in skill. The final story, *When the Man Comes, Follow Him*, is an adventure yarn of a hunt for hidden gold conducted by an educated blind racketeer and his henchmen. The blind racketeer, at once sensitive and cruel, is a "literary" projection in the style of, say, Gutman in "The Maltese Falcon"; and the first half of the tale—which indicates that when he cares to, Bates can tell a story in bread-and-butter prose—is beguiling enough. But after that the whole thing becomes overextended and dull, arousing more impatience than suspense. I'm not sure that this kind of story really belongs in this kind of book; but in any case it ought to be more skilfully turned.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Dickens as Historian and Reformer

THE DICKENS WORLD. By Humphry House. Oxford University Press. \$3.

THE critical rehabilitation of Dickens which appears to be in progress—Mr. House's book comes in the wake of Edmund Wilson's provocative revaluation in "The Wound and the Bow"—promises to be valuable as a test not only of the aesthetic and historical values in Dickens's work itself but of the standards in fiction which were initiated largely as a resistance to the tradition he crowned by his Victorian triumphs. The sentimental hero-worship attending Dickens's immense successes a century ago stimulated a reaction of contempt which came to enlist even those artists who, like James, Conrad, and Gide, had felt the powerful appeal of the untidy colossus who dominated the imaginative literature of his time from England and America to Russia. But Dickens was always too much the creator of a world, the all-embracing exponent of a moment in the moral and social consciousness of modern times, to submit to the declining fortune of a Thackeray or Eliot. Moreover, critical detraction, in the heat of its special aims, came to show as much disregard of the specific force, scope, and detail of Dickens's powers as did the devotional indulgence which brought into being a vast literature of myth-making adulation calculated to suffocate any but the ruggedest triumphs of the human imagination. It is by this ruggedness of substance, as much as by his verbal and imaginative resources, that Dickens has survived, and both now make their claims on the astuteness of his latest generation of readers.

Mr. Wilson spoke of the "pseudo-poetic booziness [of the kind sponsored by Chesterton] which verbalizes with large conceptions and ignores the most obtrusive actualities" in Dickens's novels; an opposite kind of laxity appears when the sophisticated critic becomes so impatient of popular tradition that he destroys the hero with the hero-worship and deflates the novels to the point of inanity because of the abuses they have inspired in manufacturers of popular fictional entertainment. Yet Dickens has had a consistent, if underground, claim on serious critical attention. Gissing's book of fifty years ago, despite its devotional excesses and crudity in dealing with the specific gist of the novels, suggested most of the major critical arguments; Shaw, Conrad, Santayana, Eliot, and Lubbock have proposed his aesthetic

stature; T. A. Jackson has recently set him up as a prophet of the Marxist revelation; and even Henry James, who in 1865 reviewed "Our Mutual Friend" as the work of an exhausted mechanism and helpless victim of popular compromise, could acknowledge in his old age the ineradicable mark laid by Dickens on his creative development and showed, in ultimate refinements of his art like "The Wings of the Dove" and "The Golden Bowl," the fruition of methods of indirection and suspense, of the slow surrounding of event and fact by the processes of conscience, moral curiosity, and retributive justice, which placed the author of "Bleak House" and "Little Dorrit" unmistakably in their artistic lineage. Now that masters like Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Proust are seen in their radical affinity with Dickens; now that Dickens can be viewed in the objective light made possible by declining popularity and a more realistic sense of social and psychological difficulties; now also that he may be seen, as Mr. House emphasizes, as "still the only one of the great English novelists who is read at all widely among simple people," as a reformer whose "adherence to fiction as a means of propaganda for thirty years revolutionized the attitude of the common reader to novels," and as the only man of his century to make "out of Victorian England a complete world, with a life and vigor and idiom of its own, quite unlike any other world there has ever been," the opportunity is ripe to apply our tested insight and critical methods to the imaginative creation and moral criticism which Dickens manifested above any other writer of his kind and rank.

The first task of rehabilitation is to determine the scope and authenticity of a writer's content. Where Wilson's essay aimed chiefly to recover the personal and psychic origins of the novels, House's book annotates Dickens's authority as a historian and reformer. It is, he says, their "minute attention to the business of life [that] gives Dickens's novels their immense solidity," and he makes it his business to determine the fidelity and richness of that attention, the almost official responsibility Dickens felt in recording the social revolution he witnessed and the processes and abuses of change that were bringing it about. He gives a chapter each to Dickens's treatment of history, benevolence, domestic and political economy, religion, social change, and politics. (He found himself technically unequipped to discuss Dickens's treatment of the law, which has however been recently analyzed by William Holdsworth in "Charles Dickens as a Legal Historian," and unable to do the necessary research on his treatment of education.) He not only reconstructs the conditions out of which grew Dickens's hatred of evangelical cant, moral humbug, and Biblical authoritarianism (Chadband, Pecksniff, Mrs. Clennam, Stiggins, Mrs. Nubbles, Mrs. Cruncher, the Reverend Melchisedech Howler), his detestation of organized philanthropy (Luke Honeythunder, Mrs. Jellyby, Mrs. Pardiggle's Puseyism), his contempt of Malthusian cynicism and sectarian charity ("Oliver Twist," "Our Mutual Friend," "Edwin Drood"), his "destructive Benthamism," his loathing of the casuistry of Victorian morality and economic hypocrisy (old Casby, Mrs. Gowan, Dombey, Fledgeby, the Veneerings, the Merdle connection), his rage against government machinery and nepotism (Chancery, the Circumlocution Office), his dislike of the magistracy

(Nupkins, Fang), and his dramatization of the vast industrial and monopolistic forces that were transforming the English world from its legendary taverns, stage coaches, country houses, and generous manhood to the railroad-racked, factory-darkened, speculative and piratical nightmare that appears as the sinister milieu of the later novels. He shows in full detail Dickens's lifelong concern with reform movements in his public speeches, petitions, circulars, and articles in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*—a continuous flow of pamphlets and protests that punctuated his fiction-writing. He reveals what is more important still in the artistic ingenuity of the books—the devices of anachronism Dickens perfected in order to expose the scandals

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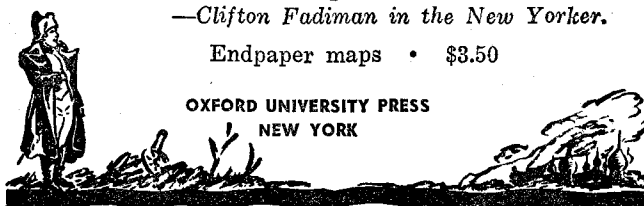
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and public outrages of the immediate present in a setting of the more remote past and thus to heighten the critical advantage of his moral indictments without sacrificing his prestige as a propagandist. Thus he placed the Merdle financial swindle, based on the débâcles of promoters like Hudson and Sadlier in the 40's, in a novel ("Little Dorrit") laid in the 20's; he satirized the excesses of Chartism by translating them into terms of the Gordon riots of the 1780's; he pilloried the injustices of Chancery the more effectively by placing them in the setting of the 1820's and of class inequality by reviving the French revolutionary drama of 1789; he continuously heightened the absurdity or enormity of modern evils by couching them in the barbarism or predatory violence of historical distance. He wrought, out of the crude matter and decadent conditions of his art, his complex methods as an ironist, a social critic, a satirist of manners, and a rebel against institutions. Thus Mr. House shows Dickens in a far more convincing historical role than that advanced by T. A. Jackson's Marxist thesis because he shows him creatively independent in his methods and experiments, continuously eclectic in arranging and invigorating his materials, unshackled by social or political special pleading, at the same time that he kept his intimate authority over the public he aimed to reach: "He seemed topical to thousands; he was not too topical for them to see the point, nor too advanced to have the public conscience on his side . . . he so exploited his knowledge that the public recognized its master in knowing."

When a writer, however public in his fame and appeal, maintains that kind of independence, he stands the only real chance permitted to him of surviving in the interests of posterity. He keeps himself free as a moral force through his integrity as an inventor and craftsman. Mr. House stops short of examining the art of Dickens's novels, but his book—like Wilson's essay, which goes much farther in this direction without tracing out fully its lines of critical interest—will be called on to give substance to future examinations of these values. One hopes such revaluation will now proceed intelligently. Inane conventional judgments and opinions on Dickens still crowd textbooks and literary histories. To reread him today, no longer for his plots and popular effects but for his writing, his methods of satire, his feats of stylistic contrast and critical implication, his symbolic powers, his obliquity of vision and the astonishing poise of his sympathies (revealing often quite the opposite of the crude moral antithesis he is still accused of standardizing), his prodigious atmospheric evocation and his feats of historical condensation, is to realize that traditional accounts of his humor and sentiment, his treatment of the rich, his handling of manners and social accents, and his whole encyclopedic variety of documentation stand in need of a revision from which none of Dickens's weaknesses or compromises exempt the serious critic. What Wilson and House permit us to see of his greater stature as a historian and acutely disturbed creative conscience demands extension into his full powers as a literary artist. In the lull now apparently at hand between yesterday's literary problems and tomorrow's, the opportunity for restoring a great experimentalist in words and human experience to his proper rank has arrived.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL

The German Art of War

THE AXIS GRAND STRATEGY: BLUEPRINTS FOR THE TOTAL WAR. Compiled and Edited for the Committee for National Morale by Ladislav Farrago. Farrar and Rinehart. \$3.75.

SHOULD this collection of excerpts from recent German military literature be used as a sort of secret-service report on the strategic plans of the Axis or the new tactical methods which the Germans will employ this spring, its value would be very limited. Even if we accept the editor's patent overstatement that "the men who are quoted can be believed implicitly" and that "the Germans indulge themselves in open discussion of what other peoples consider deep military and diplomatic secrets," it would still be true that only generalities are publicly discussed in Germany and that those discussions are couched in terms which make their real implications intelligible only after the event has occurred. On the other hand, the editor himself is careful to emphasize the various contradictions and conflicting schools in German military thought, and he also points out that some of the writers either wield no influence or are in opposition to the High Command's doctrines. Finally, all these publications were written before the Russian war, and none of them deal with the Battle of Britain—two events that changed the German military outlook in a fundamental way. America's military leaders can be reasonably sure of never having to fight a German army using the tactics of May, 1940, or June, 1941.

However, if this book is used as a source of information on modern, and for that matter German, military thought, its value is enormous. It makes available in the English language the most important military ideas, such lasting contributions to military theory as Colonel Schaefer's "Art of War" and "The General and the Art of Generalship," Colonel Braun's "Strategic Attack," and General Erfurth's "Cooperation of Separate Units of the Army." For American and British readers, Captain Sorge's "Invasion Across the Sea" will be of particular interest. It is noteworthy that the articles which deal with the nature and art of war, with generalship, and with land warfare are incomparably more instructive than those dealing with air warfare and the non-military aspects of total war. The editor, in his laudable endeavor to present a complete survey of German opinion about all problems connected with modern war, has included some publications and political speeches which are of little interest. In my opinion, it would have been more useful if he had concentrated on those German writings which actually show originality and make a real contribution to military science. I hope that in the next edition, if not Moltke and Freytag-Loringhoven, then at least Schlieffen, Groener, Seeckt, Ludendorff's "Total War," Erfurth's "Surprises in War," and, if available, Blau's "Propaganda" will be included in the volume. It might also be useful to remember that Italy and Japan are not only members of the Axis but also possess an extremely interesting military literature.

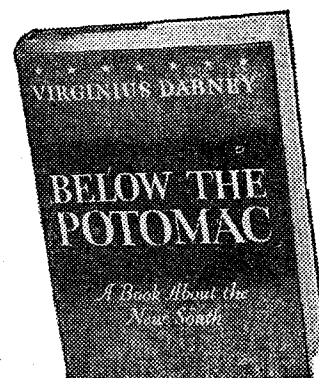
The translation of the often involved German texts is on the whole excellent. Still, some errors occur. Frederick II, for instance, never waged a "warfare of position" or a "war of exhaustion," but a war of attrition, which is the cor-

rect translation for *Ermattungsstrategie*. Moltke did not call strategy "a system of supplementary help," but a system of expedients. The editorial comment should have been cleared of some flagrant historical errors. For instance, the editor writes, "Were Clausewitz living now, he probably would be a refugee . . . writing his book on the war against Hitler." As a matter of fact, Clausewitz *was* a political refugee, but he did not write his book during his exile, being employed by Czar Alexander more usefully than present-day refugees are employed. He had an active command in the Russian army and was one of the authors of the Russian war plan of 1812, which in 1941 was to be repeated with formidable success against his own country. Nor was it the First World War which proved the correctness of Clausewitz's doctrines, as the editor maintains. Clausewitz's European reputation dates from 1870 and was rather imperiled by the course of World War I. With respect to the Schlieffen plan, the editor states that Schlieffen "did not actually figure upon Russia as an adversary." But he did just that! The Schlieffen plan was a plan for a war against France *and* Russia. The editor also asserts that "the younger Moltke and Ludendorff were in agreement that, contrary to Schlieffen, it was the left wing of the German army that should be stronger," and that this "opportunistic strategy" "made real the peril of a French break-through on the weakened right." This is incorrect. Never was the German left wing in 1914 stronger than the right wing. Even though the left wing was slightly stronger in 1914 than Schlieffen intended to have it in 1905, still the right wing had the maximum possible strength. No danger

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of a French break-through on the right wing ever existed, but the modified Schlieffen plan eliminated the danger of a French break-through in the German center and on the left wing.

These remarks may sound more critical than they are intended to be, and it is only fair to point out that Mr. Farago and the Committee for National Morale have done a very good job in publishing this book. Some of the editorial comments, such as the introduction to the air-war chapter, are very illuminating and pointed. The collecting, translating, and editing of this material was a gigantic task, and in comparison with the usefulness of the whole undertaking a few flaws do not count. It is desirable that all those persons who at present are concerned with making war against the Axis read carefully the important German military doctrines included in this volume. Much can be learned from these pages.

STEFAN T. POSSONY

Principle and Poet

OUT OF THE JEWEL. By Rolfe Humphries. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50.

THIS collection, overdue, of the poems of Rolfe Humphries should be of considerable interest to anyone who is concerned with the achievements rather than with the novelties of contemporary poetry. Mr. Humphries has apparently devoted himself humbly and honestly, if sometimes unadventurously, to the study of the craft of poetry, and even the more undistinguished items in this collection manifest his integrity and show the fruits of his discipline. Further, the real achievements in the volume seem more solid and satisfying than the more pretentious work of some of Mr. Humphries's flashier and better-advertised contemporaries.

The volume bears the motto, "A minor art needs to be hard, condensed, and durable." Mr. Humphries has aimed at such an art. He has wanted his poetry to be clear, self-contained, and finished. He has eschewed violent effects, cacophonies and incongruities, surprises and eccentricities. His characteristic rhythms are mellifluous rather than bold. Though they are capable of rather subtle gradations, they are rarely exciting. All in all, he has aimed, one assumes, at traditional poetry, a central poetry—a poetry which does not

intend to be caught out on any of the various limbs on which contemporary poetry is sometimes caught. At this question of a "central" poetry I shall glance again shortly, but for the moment I wish to say that whether or not Mr. Humphries's ideal is central, he has sometimes achieved, in the terms which he has set for himself, a specialized and, in this period, rare type of excellence.

To begin, if Mr. Humphries has aimed at mellifluous and subtle rather than bold and exciting rhythms, his ear is capable of detecting them. For instance, the reader discovers a number of lines such as these:

Slumber on stone, and on awaking rise,
Somber obsidian in their open eyes.

Or there are passages which hint of the Elizabethans, Cam-
pion, for example:

Sigh no more that silence, given grace
By music, comes to grief as music ends.
Render to music's echo, lost in space,
The compliment that ease of heart extends
To sain the lonesome areas of air.

Or there are stanzas with the gradation of rhythm and richness of verbal texture, sometimes a little less than discreet, which is found in *All on a Summer's Day*:

Moving like music over the dull water,
Double device upon the shield enlarged,
With a golden wake that goes where he has gone,
Or poised below the willow along the margin
Before the gaze of the bronze maternal angel,
Looking down at the lake of silver, lingers
Lovely and proud and innocent, the swan.

Primarily, Mr. Humphries's rhythms are "mood" rhythms, rhythms that operate as a general conditioning factor in the total poetic effect and that are rarely sharpened to specific dramatic contingencies.

This rhythmical practice is to be associated with the fact that most of the poems are not dramatic in conception. The emphasis on situation is generally slight. Description bulks large. A good many poems represent single observations. Most of the poems are constructed to a single "turn" or "point." There is not a great deal of shading of tone in any individual poem, or ironical qualification. In fact, the translations, of which some half-dozen or so are included in the book and which, by the way, usually come out definitely as poems and not as mere translations, tend to be more dramatic than Mr. Humphries's original compositions. That Mr. Humphries is somewhat suspicious of the more obviously complicated effects in poetry may be indicated by some critical comments which have made their way into his work. For instance, he says, "Never overweight a phrase," and again, after the description of the play of light over a valley, "Beyond this pleasure let the mind not tarry." And in the poem called *Imperative Address* we may find something of a credo:

Unweave these overwoven intricacies,
Unsow the salt-sown areas of ground,
Put the pure image where the blank page lies,
Cultivate sight and sound.

We do not know how far Mr. Humphries the critic would care, in the cold blood of prose, to push the principle which

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Mr. Humphries the poet has enunciated in the hot blood of poetry. And it is true that the defects of the virtues of contemporary poetry have been "overwoven intricacies," confusion of structure, and, on the one hand, vagueness, on the other, an arid pseudo-intellectualism. But beyond the "pleasure" of "sight and sound" the mind is not infrequently determined to "tarry." Even the great masters of the "minor art" in which Mr. Humphries finds his personal ideal frequently tarried beyond that "pleasure." Sidney, Campion, Marvell, even Herrick, even Waller, Carew, Blake, Bridges, and Yeats "tarried," and with some profit to themselves and us. These writers are masters of the "minor art," and we think of their work as being essentially "lyrical," essentially "pure." But poems like Campion's "Blame not my cheeks," or Carew's "Ask me no more," or Waller's "Go lovely rose," or Herrick's "Delight in Disorder," are rather complicated structures. Their "purity" is achieved not by the rejection but by the conquest of complication. And perhaps the fact that these poets "tarried" may partly account for the fact that their minor art is "hard, condensed, and durable," that they are, for us, central.

We do not know, as I have said, how far Mr. Humphries would care to push the principle which he has given in the quotations above. Certainly we do not know that he would care to legislate for other poets. And in any case it is important for any poet to determine the limits within which he himself can profitably operate. But perhaps Mr. Humphries is too much of a strict constructionist in interpreting his own principle. The poet in the poet, however, may sometimes happily forget the critic in the poet, as, I believe, Mr. Humphries has done in his best poems. I quote Proteus, or the Shapes of Conscience, in the hope that others will share my admiration for it:

This is Proteus, a god. He comes from the ocean
Sometimes, at hot noon, and crosses the beach
Looking for inland shade. If he comes within reach,
As he may, dive at his knees; do not be afraid
To bring him down to the sand with a flying tackle
And bind him, overthrown, with the rude compulsion
Of manacle, shackle, chain. And even so,
Ride him hard with your weight. Do not let go.

This god is worse than sly. In your hands he will turn
To utter fire, and roar in your face and eyes;
Or burn, burn like a beast, lion or tiger, bright
And hot and rank; or a lewd and ugly boar;
Or some unshapely horror, moist and brown,
Repulsive pulp to touch, and foul to smell;
Or he may be a lovely river of silver
And blue and green, with delicate wave and ripple
Over the mottled pebbles.

Hold him down.

Until the miracle do not let him go.

The final change you will never understand.
You will not know how he ever managed to rise,
Nor how you rose yourself, to find him there,
An upright natural presence, facing you,
As tall as you, in the soft ambrosial air,
Smiling, and looking you straight in the eyes, like a man,
And telling you what it was you wanted to know.

In this poem it seems that the mind has "tarried."

ROBERT PENN WARREN

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"And Men Decay"

AMERICA'S OWN REFUGEES. By Henry Hill Collins, Jr. Princeton University Press. \$3.

ILL FARES THE LAND. By Carey McWilliams. Little, Brown and Company. \$3.

THESE two books derive principally from the same sources, the hearings on migratory labor before the La Follette and Tolan Congressional committees. They supplement each other remarkably. McWilliams's approach is rather grimly that of the scholar. He strives to appear cool even when he is flaming angry as he seeks to penetrate beyond degradation to causes. Collins is more plainly the crusading reporter and outright exhorter. He brings more living people into his story and lets you hear their voices. He can describe a dust storm, "the earth-breathing wind," in the general accents of the old-time Western thriller.

"Another whiteskin bit the dust," I scrawled in the margin at this point and wondered if that were funny. It isn't. At one point, toward the end of his more extended analysis, McWilliams remarks that the Populist farmers, with their outcry against Wall Street and monopolies, were not so far from the main cause of farm distress and dispossession, even now. The general beat and color of Collins's narrative, even when he is talking statistics, has the Bryan ring.

Despite an occasional extravagance of style, or perhaps because of it, Collins sounds forth a warm counterpoint to McWilliams's professional prose. But McWilliams, publishing some months after Collins, gets around in the end to saying much the same thing, with multiplied instances. Both books, I read in some newspaper reviews, may be said now to be outdated. Collins, writing before Pearl Harbor, undertakes to dispose of this view in advance:

Rather than assuaging the ills of migration, the bugle cry of defense seems likely to make them worse. . . . Portents multiply that when the present emergency is over the stories told in the pages ahead will seem simple of solution compared with those that will lie before us. . . . Many a reader of this book, now comfortably lounging in his favorite evening chair, well fed, well dressed, well housed, is a potential candidate for migration.

Considering both urban and rural migrants, ranging the whole scene of increasing American dispossession from California to Ohio to Puerto Rico and the slums of displaced Puerto Ricans in New York City, Collins sometimes strikes off sentences that sum things up in a way McWilliams never can. Of Puerto Rico: "Cane has gobbled up the fertile plains while people scabble and starve on the crumpled uplands." From a Puerto Rican migrant stranded in New York City's slums Collins reports committee testimony:

We want work and we can't get it. We find that the small island is in the hands of two or three centralized corporations whose only ideal in life seems to be profit regardless of human welfare, and we are confronted with the problem that we either get away from the island or we starve there.

"Any exploration of the land-holding situation in Puerto Rico," Governor R. G. Tugwell writes in a recent report to the Secretary of the Interior, "has obvious implications for the South." It has; and for the Great Plains wheatland

also, where great man-and-machine combinations swept freehold family farming almost away in World War I. The pattern of displacement and of the descent from ownership to peonage seems different, more spacious, here than in Puerto Rico. But the effect is not so different in the end.

Faced at home with the unrelenting antagonism of the Associated Farmers and other big operators, McWilliams, who is Immigration Commissioner in California, seems at times to be conducting a counter-persecution rather than an inquiry. But his work is so well documented and his reportorial integrity so manifest that you have no doubt he is telling the truth.

The truth, in detail, is staggering. Millions of our own people have been forced by the Industrial Revolution's encroachments on agriculture into lives of insecurity, suffering, and utter indignity. Someone, presumably, took care of the slaves; it paid to take care of them. The plight of these men, women, and children is worse. They are uprooted, harried, and hunted from state to state. They are disfranchised and miserably underpaid. They have no stake whatever in this country and its future. "Move on," the cops and vigilantes tell them, "move on!"

"What is Senator Byrd thinking of, he and those other landlord-Congressmen?" a mildly liberal Southern editor asked me indignantly during the recent push to wipe out the Farm Security Administration, the National Youth Administration, and the Civilian Conservation Corps. "We almost had a revolution down here after the last crash. People were squatting on private land and wouldn't move. They were breaking in bands into grocery stores and taking what they needed. We're going to need more government services for the rural poor after the next crash, not less. We need more right now, not less."

I was raised here where I live now in Maryland, gently, among landlord-minded people. I subscribe to their views as to the desirability of so charming a life. I must say, though, that in the light of accelerating dispossession the country over, increasing homelessness, and a rising mutter, I find a great deal here that is disquieting, to say the least.

People will haggle about prices fairly peacefully. The so-called parity legislation of Triple-A, dating from 1933, was the imperfect outcome of a long urban-rural haggle about prices. I ask all landlord-minded Congressmen and business representatives to recall that it was not until waves of downright foreclosure and outright dispossession beat high in the Corn Belt, around 1930, that actual local rebellions occurred.

Less sharply, but more widely, those waves of displacement are beating ever higher and faster now. Men and their families cast out from their homes, denied access to the earth even as self-respecting tenants, scattered to the four winds to do deadening and joyless labor in other men's fields and plants, will prove dangerous Americans to have at large.

If anyone thinks that I am indulging here, myself, in mere Populist oratory, let him see the American documentary film "The Land," made by Robert Flaherty. It opens at the Museum of Modern Art in New York on April 9 and will be shown throughout the country. It proves that Steinbeck, Collins, and McWilliams really know what they are writing about.

RUSSELL LORD

IN BRIEF

TWO CAPTAINS. By Benjamin Kaverin. Modern Age Books. \$2.75.

A longish romance by a popular Soviet author, in which an unsuccessful expedition to the Arctic at the turn of the century is dramatically contrasted with a similar adventuresome expedition of the present day. The story is that of the captain of the second expedition to the North, who is enamored of the first captain's daughter and avenges his death. Written more in the manner of an American best-seller than of a Soviet propaganda piece, the story has a colorful, fast-moving plot, depending at times upon startling coincidences but full of lively pictures of the effervescent Russian spirit.

WHAT IS MATHEMATICS: AN ELEMENTARY APPROACH TO ITS IDEAS AND METHODS. By Richard Courant and Herbert Robbins. Oxford University Press. \$5.

The various recent books professing to teach the layman something about mathematics indicate a considerable popular interest in the subject but great difference of opinion concerning how it may best be satisfied. The books vary all the way from highly popularized accounts of what, in the most general terms, mathematics "is about" to much more technical attempts to instruct the laymen concerning specific mathematical processes. At one extreme is Eric Townsend Bell's "Men of Mathematics," and almost at the other is the present stiff but luminous volume, which is, in effect, an elementary textbook of general mathematics. It bristles with those figures and formulas without which any attempt to explain mathematical processes is something of a snare and a delusion, and it demands of the reader the willingness as well as the ability to do a good deal of hard thinking of a genuinely mathematical character. It differs from the pure textbook in omitting those drills in technique necessary to anyone who is going to use mathematics as a tool and, more importantly, in disregarding both the arbitrary subdivisions of the subject and the tendency to treat only certain branches which owe their preeminence to little except the rather rigid traditionalism of schools and colleges. There are, therefore, extremely interesting sections on projective geometry and topology, neither of which the average student ever hears of, and a general tendency to see the

subject as a growing rather than a purely traditional one. The book would make invaluable supplementary reading for anyone studying mathematics at the college level. Laymen had better attempt it only if they have a good deal of time and mental energy to spare.

WHEN PEOPLES MEET: A STUDY IN RACE AND CULTURE CONTACTS. Edited by Alain Locke and Bernhard J. Stern. Progressive Education Association. \$3.50.

The editors of this interesting and important book have provided selections from a wide range of authorities on racial, international, and minority problems arranged in a definite plan with introductory chapters by the editors. From them there emerges a clear picture of the connection between current social and international difficulties and the direction of the world revolution now going on. The problem can here be seen to carry its own solution. Whether or not it will be allowed to work itself out is another question.

WESTWARD THE COURSE! THE NEW WORLD OF OCEANIA. By Paul McGuire. William Morrow and Company. \$3.75.

From Vancouver to Hawaii, Fiji, and New Zealand, across Australia from Sydney to Darwin, from Bali through Java and Sumatra to Singapore, the author travels on this informative journey—informative historically and geographically, that is. The book went to press two days after Pearl Harbor. If the author had waited as many months he would have found some of his political and military facts no longer true, and his view of empire—a view which has lingered on since Kipling overshot Disraeli—given the *coup de grâce*. Mr. McGuire is a very well-informed and enlightened imperialist, but an imperialist he is. In spite of all this, however, his book is still enjoyable and still informative. The thirty-two photographs and three maps are excellent.

GEORGE B. McCLELLAN. By H. J. Eckenrode and Bryan Conrad. The University of North Carolina Press. \$3.50.

History has not been kind to George B. McClellan, and the authors have set out to correct what they regard as injustice. Since they write with enthusiasm, and also with intimate knowledge of the battles in which McClellan was engaged, they have fashioned an

interesting book, but they have not proved their thesis that he was "the man who saved the Union." McClellan was a great military leader, but even the authors recognize that he was politically dangerous. It still seems true, as it must have seemed to Lincoln and other Union leaders, that one could admire McClellan's ability, but it was difficult to trust him.

Art Note

150 YEARS OF AMERICAN PRIMITIVES. The Primitives Gallery of Harry Stone. Until April 15.

This collection of about forty works, few of which are first-rate in their genre, seems to support my contention that the best American art has been, and perhaps still is, primitive or naive. These pictures have a first-hand quality, an immediacy, which cultured American painting lacks. This quality alone is not enough for great art, but there is no great art without it. Incidentally, it is curious to see how the painters here, most of them of the nineteenth century, reflect the influence of their academic contemporaries, with their tonal monotony, brown sauce, and all. C. G.

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RECORDS

MY REMAINING two March recordings from Columbia include a set (X-215, \$2.63) of Rossini's Overture to "Semiramide" played by Beecham with the London Philharmonic. Beecham produces beautiful playing with his orchestra, but not the breathtakingly subtle colors and nuances, transparent textures, sharp attacks and contours that Toscanini produces with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony in the Victor set; in style too Beecham's performance is good, but pale and ineffectual after Toscanini's; the sound of the Beecham performance is excellently recorded, but so is the Toscanini (its only defect is that the drum at the beginning is almost inaudible).

In contrast to this set, with its performance and recording that are the product of good taste and good sense, is the set (X-216, \$2.63) with Stokow-

ski's bloated performance of his orchestral version of Bach's Passacaglia with the All-American Orchestra (there is nothing less loud than *forte* in the entire concluding fugue), its bloated, shrieky recorded sound (the volume control has to be turned far down from its position for the Beecham set).

A few more March recordings have arrived from Victor, including a second one (18498, \$1) made by Stokowski with the N. B. C. Symphony, in which the tendency to elephantiasis is evident in a performance of Bach's Arioso that merely expands and contracts string sonority from *p* to *ffff* and back repeatedly, and in a recording that necessitates turning the volume control even further down than for the Columbia set of the Passacaglia. On wide-range Scott machines with light, sensitive pickups the rattles, distortions, and surface noises are appalling; with the heavier, less sensitive Astatic Tru-tan pickup the sound becomes quite clean; but even then it is brash and unnatural.

On another Victor single disc (13809, \$1) is the fine Andante from Bach's Sonata No. 3 for unaccompanied violin, continentally arranged for string orchestra by Bachrich, well played as an Adagio by Fiedler's Sinfonietta, and well recorded—with an arrangement of a less interesting Bach Fantasia from an unfinished work for organ on the reverse side. Another single (18413, \$1) offers four moderately enjoyable small pieces for organ—Trio: Organum Triplex by Perotin (1180-1236), "Le Moulin de Paris" by an anonymous fifteenth-century composer, Fantaisie sur l'air "Une Jeune Fillette" by du Caurroy (1549-1609), and a Chaconne by Louis (not the great) Couperin (1658)—which are well played by Bonnet and well recorded. And on still another (2206, \$.75) is Nocolau's Good Friday Music in a Catalonian Church, about which I cannot say much, since it is hard for me to hear anything beyond the poor singing of the Augustana Choir.

Victor also offers Dvorak's Symphony No. 1 (actually his sixth) which, despite occasional engaging themes and passages, and despite what Tovey finds to say for it as a program annotator, is one of Dvorak's less interesting works. The performance by Talich with the old Czech Philharmonic is excellent and agreeably recorded (Set 874, \$5.50). My copy has a couple of sides with noisily defective surfaces, and one with wavering pitch.

If you like native Brazilian music

you will find it well performed and recorded in two Columbia sets (C-83 and 84, each \$2.63).

President Roosevelt's December 8 war message is well reproduced on a Columbia single (36516, \$.53), and Churchill's December 26 address to Congress in an album (C-85, \$2.63).

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Repression vs. Propaganda

Dear Sirs: Miss Kirchwey is taking on a pretty sizable order in urging the wholesale suppression of the "fascist press." On the basis of her argument it would require the government to deny the use of the mails, the express companies, and hand-to-hand distribution—with criminal prosecutions to insure results—to all publications found to be pro-Axis, anti-British, anti-democratic, anti-Semitic, or playing up the evils of our democracy in a way to give aid and comfort to our enemies.

Aside from the obvious obstacle of the Bill of Rights, the proposal is as impracticable and dangerous as it is fantastic coming from *The Nation*. It is impracticable because it would apply to a vast and vague range of opinions among which it is impossible to draw the distinctions which appear to Miss Kirchwey so easy. She would include the "more dangerous" influences of Hearst, Colonel McCormick, and the Pattersons, and heaven knows how many more. Such great enterprises cannot be suppressed. If a few of the weaker were suppressed, they would only be driven underground into a secret conspiracy harder to deal with. The proposal is dangerous because the machinery of suppression once set in motion would rebound ultimately against the liberal and labor press.

The only democratic way, and the only sure way in the long run, to beat the enemies of democracy is by our united strength and determination. We are not yet armed with the enthusiasm and power that should be ours because our goals are not clear and our ranks are therefore divided. Our chief enemies are to be found not in the "fascist press" but in the ranks of those who put their privileges above patriotism and their class above their country; those who would rather make peace with the Axis than win the war with Roosevelt, who would rather fight "communism" (in which category they would include *The Nation*) than Hitler and Japan. Certainly the "fascist press" includes some of them, but the most powerful and most numerous don't advertise. They just fight labor, the "reds," and the New Deal.

We cannot suppress them, but united democratic forces can resist and overwhelm them. Counter-propaganda is

our best weapon. *The Nation* should be the last to betray a loss of faith in democratic power by proposing to beat the Axis with Axis methods.

ROGER BALDWIN

New York, March 25

[How can our old friend Roger Baldwin talk such nonsense? Doesn't he really know an out-and-out fascist paper when he sees one? Freda Kirchwey did not advocate suppression of "all publications found to be pro-Axis, anti-British, etc." She specifically pointed to the publications of "native fascists like Pelley, Deatherage, and . . . Coughlin." Has Mr. Baldwin any doubts about these? The arrest of Pelley and several other fascists and supporters of Hitler gives reason to hope that the Department of Justice, from now on, is not going to find such discriminations impossible. Is the Civil Liberties Union planning to defend Pelley, Coughlin and Company? It would make us very unhappy to think that Mr. Baldwin and his associates knew so little about the realities of political warfare.

We recognize the difficulties involved in any sort of legal coercion. We also recognize the fact that this total war cannot be fought without it. The concentration camps of Europe are filled with those democrats who were afraid to infringe the "rights" of their fascist enemies lest they set a precedent for the invasion of their own rights.

As regards McCormick, Hearst, and Patterson, Mr. Baldwin completely, though no doubt unintentionally, distorts Miss Kirchwey's argument. She did not "include" their publications in the fascist press. In fact, she pointedly excluded them, describing them as "fellow-travelers" to be watched and subjected to attack—just as Mr. Baldwin urges. She said "their defeatist arguments and misleading information must be met by an unceasing barrage of counter-propaganda. . . . And the moment they skid across the thin line that divides their doctrine from open treason they should face the full blast of the law." Does Mr. Baldwin disagree with that? This quotation seems to us also to satisfy rather explicitly Mr. Baldwin's demand for counter-propaganda. We fear he did not read the editorial with the care such severe criticism would seem to require.

We cannot believe that Mr. Baldwin

thinks *The Nation* has failed to pay sufficient attention to those other reactionary forces he lists as the "chief enemies of democracy." But if he does, we refer him confidently to pages 413 and 415 of this issue and to a large part of all past and future issues of *The Nation*.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

"Sun's" Friends Still Hope

Dear Sirs: Chicago friends of the Chicago *Sun* are grateful to *The Nation* for publishing Milton Mayer's attack on the *Sun*. If all he says is true—and we know that some of it is—this is the time to speak, in the hope that the paper may yet be remade into the altogether fine one that we had hoped for.

It is far from being a total disappointment. We are indeed grateful for the straight, untainted reporting of the national news, for many a gallant editorial, and for the stirring columns of Knickerbocker, Fodor, Grafton, Lippmann, and others. Our satisfaction in these fine features and a stubbornly persisting hope that the *Sun* will yet be our dream-come-true should together serve to save the paper from the sad fate of useless things long enough to give its managers their opportunity to make it a real force in Chicago.

Certainly any degree of commitment to Mayor Kelly has the opposite effect. For the *Sun* management to have remained editorially silent on the recent act of taking the school for crippled children out of the hands of honored experts to pay political debts puts it on the low civic level of the *Tribune*. For another newspaper of that kind there is no need in Chicago. May Mr. Field see the light and find the way.

RUTH E. MOORE

Chicago, March 23

Touché

Dear Sirs: Touché! It was the conversation on page 132 of Miss Boyden's satire that threw me off. By the time I had got to page 171 I was so convinced of the wickedness of her sparrows I misread the speeches. Everything is so confused in that book the reviewer got confused too. Sorry. But even with this straightened out a little, my opinion remains the same, alas.

KATHERINE ANNE PORTER

Saratoga Springs, N. Y., April 1